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February 1949

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VOL. X, NO. 1

FEBRUARY, 1949

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Editorial

Music, Chauvinism and Bad Manners

I am not a spiritual doctor trying to see how much Jones can swallow and keep down; . . . *I am Jones himself asking what there is to eat.*

William Temple. By F. A. Iremonger. (O.U.P.) 1948. P. 162.

THERE is much in the contemporary musical scene which wears the trade-mark of the spoilt child—by turns fractious, bumptious and irresponsible. A cane and a dose of salts can work wonders with a grisly child; but music in London is both more tragic and less amenable.

Disappointed local boys, unable to command or unwilling to accept engagements at the Royal Opera, have criticised the employment of foreign singers so harshly that, in one instance at least, English members of the company have felt compelled entirely to dissociate themselves from such a display of petty spite. Then, more recently, Sir Thomas Beecham, performing one of his periodic exercises in destructive oratory, chose, among other lesser indiscretions, to castigate the artistic director for being a German! So much can be said in genuine and apposite criticism of the affairs of our national opera house that there is no vestige of excuse for this kind of chauvinistic, would-be rabble-rousing, even in the unhealthy atmosphere so often created by a conductor's personal observations on the antecedents, habits and general behaviour of one of his colleagues.

Readers may also remember the parochial attitude recently adopted by the Ministry of Labour towards Karl Schnabel. On 11th November Dr. Jager asked in the Commons

whether the Minister of Labour will give his reasons for the banning of public performances in this country by Mr. Schnabel; and whether this pianist was informed before he accepted bookings that he would, in contradistinction to many other foreign artists, be restricted in the number of engagements he could undertake.

Mr. Ness Edwards replied:

There are limitations on the number of engagements that any individual concert artist not domiciled in this country may be allowed to take. Mr. K. U. Schnabel, not to be confused with his famous father [*sic*!], was permitted to come to this country on three separate occasions during the first eight months of the year to fulfil twenty-three engagements. A further application was made for him to come to take forty additional engagements during the period 1st October to 19th January. On 17th September his agent was informed that this number must be limited and it was arranged that twenty-three more should be allowed, making a total of forty-six engagements within twelve months. This artist has thus been more liberally treated than any other foreign concert artist. In reply to the last part of the question, agents and promoters are well aware that any commitments into which they may enter are subject to the necessary permission being granted.

This is not the place to discuss the liberality or otherwise of the treatment given to this particular case; but the first two and the last two lines of Mr. Edwards' reply reveal a restrictive official attitude towards visiting artists which, if more

widely known and understood, would engender a mood of grave misgiving among sincere British artists and music-lovers. We specifically except those commercially minded Britons who sing or play with little distinction and are understandably anxious not to have to face serious foreign competition.

Among other follies of the period we note the London Symphony Orchestra's refusal on 28th November to play under Louis Kentner's direction. It appears that at rehearsal there had been no cause for complaint: and it is probable that Mr. Kentner, as conductor, proved at least as efficient as some of the time-beaters under whom the LSO have been willing to play in the past. Perhaps Mr. Kentner lacks Union recognition as a conductor? Whatever the technical complications, nothing can excuse the parlous and boorish exhibition of ill-mannered stupidity which took place in the Albert Hall that Sunday evening.

There is another unpromising side of this already drab and cheerless picture:—the passive submission of most of our music critics to professional incompetence and the utterly inartistic desecration of masterpieces. It is reasonable for many of them to complain of the few lines that modern press lords seem to think music criticism is worth; but it is undignified and even incompetent to fill those lines with uncritical drivel which may or may not be sycophantic as well—besides lending weight to the press lords' opinion of the critical profession.

If the practice of music in England is to improve, which it must if it is to retain any title to the dignity of art, then such improvement must be demanded *by the critics*. We must commend the highest if we hear it; while the cheap, the inferior and the counterfeit which we hear on every side we must curse with all the fury of a long-pent hurricane—a hurricane which has been pent for so long that we shall first have to prove we still have the power to unleash it.

Before the war (1939) a section of our public could be relied upon to discriminate between the artists and the charlatans who fight for the prizes in all branches of the entertainment industry. That section has been dispersed and decimated by old age, death violent and natural, and a new social order which is as ready to apply the term genius to the dustman as our fathers were reluctant to bestow it upon any composer later than Brahms.

There can be no doubt that criticism has a job to do, nor as to what the job is. We have to find out what there is that is fit to eat and then by a process of selection, in the form of encouragement or censure, try to ensure that the public is offered a more attractive choice of musical diet.

GEOFFREY SHARP

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Schenker's Contribution to Music Theory

BY

MICHAEL MANN

REFERENCES

¹ Articles on Schenker in musical cyclopædias: *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, the only technical exposition of the Schenker approach to be found in musical dictionaries (art. "Urlinie", V. Zuckerkandl); *Grove's Dictionary of Music*, the first article on Schenker appeared in the Supplementary Vol. 1940; it limits its outlook mostly to biographical facts. *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians* (4th ed. 1940) contains biographical material not furnished by *Grove*. Other short biographical articles: Oscar Thompson's *Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians* (4th ed. 1946); *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians*, etc.

² Translations: Miss Katz in *Challenge to Musical Tradition* makes the somewhat sweeping statement that "none of Schenker's books has been translated into English". *Grove* mentions a published translation of the first part of the *Kontrapunkt* by J. Petrie Dunn and one of the *Harmonielehre* in preparation. Baker (1940) follows *Grove* as regards the translation of the *Kontrapunkt*. Neither the catalogues of the Library of Congress in Washington nor those of the British Museum in London show any reference to a translation of Schenker's works.

³ As the catalogues of Heinrich Schenker's theoretical works given in the musical dictionaries named above are without exception not only incomplete, but often misleading (Dr. Karl Geiringer, for example, in *Grove*, besides several other errors, confuses the *Tonwille* with the later *Meisterwerke in der Musik*) I may do well to list them here chronologically. I am indebted for this list—as for other invaluable information and advice—to Anthony van Hoboken.

Will be referred to hereafter as:	Ein Beitrag zur Ornamentik	..	..	..	(published before the <i>Harmonielehre</i>)
NMT I	Neue Musikalische Theorien und Phantasien, "von einem Künstler"	..	..	..
	Bd. I, <i>Harmonielehre</i>	..	..	..	Cotta, 1906
	The same, later ed. by "H. Schenker"	..	..	..	Cotta, 1906
	Instrumentations-Tabelle by "Artur Niloff"	..	..	..	Univ. Ed., 1908
	Ein Beitrag zur Ornamentik neue revidierte und vermehrte Ausgabe	..	..	..	" " 1908
NMT II	Neue Musikalische Theorien und Phantasien—				
	Bd. II/1; <i>Kontrapunkt 1</i>	..	..	..	" " 1910
	Beethoven's Neunte Symphonie	..	..	..	" " 1912
EA	Erläuterungs-Ausgaben der letzten fünf Sonaten Beethovens:				
	Op. 109	..	..	..	" " 1913
	Op. 110	..	..	..	" " 1914
	Op. 111	..	..	..	" " 1915
	Op. 101	..	..	..	" " 1920-21
	Op. 106 has not been published because the autograph is lost.				
TW	"Der Tonwille", 10 Hefte, appeared periodically in "Tonwille-Verlag" (Alb. J. Gutmann)	..	..	..	1921-24
	Separate publication (out of <i>Tonwille</i>): Beethovens 5. Symphonie				
NMT II	Neue Musikalische Theorien und Phantasien—				
	Bd. II/2; <i>Kontrapunkt 2</i>	..	..	..	Univ. Ed., 1922

MW	Das Meisterwerk in der Musik; ein Jahrbuch .. Drei Masken Verlag
	I 1925
	II 1926
	III 1930
UT	Fünf Urlinie-Tafeln Univ. Ed., 1932
	Joh. Brahms, Oktaven und Quintenstudien, aus dem Nachlass herausgegeben und erläutert .. Univ. Ed., ?
NMT III	Neue Musikalische Theorien und Phantasien— Bd. III; Der Freie Satz Univ. Ed., 1935 (after Schenker's death)

See also note 6.

⁴ The *Harvard Dictionary* supplies the following Schenker bibliography: A. T. Katz (*Musical Quarterly*, XXI), R. Sessions (*Modern Music*, vol. XII, 4), Walter Riezler (*Die Musik*, XXII, 7). We may add to this: R. Sessions (*Modern Music*, vol. XV, 3 and vol. XV, 4), both of these two articles deal critically with Schenker's NMT III. In the present essay we are quoting exclusively from the article in *Modern Music*, vol. XII, 4. William J. Mitchell (*Musicology*, vol. I, 2). A very concentrated introductory essay by Hellmuth Federhofer (*Schweizerische Musikzeitung*, Oct. 1947). A critical editorial by P. H. Láng (*Musical Quarterly*, XXXII, 2). An article by Arthur Waldeck and Nathan Broder appeared in the *Musical Mercury* (1935). Miss Katz also speaks of some articles on Schenker in the *Teacher's Review* which we have not been able to identify. An introduction to Schenker's works on a larger scale will be found in Dr. Oswald Jonas' *Das Wesen des musikalischen Kunstwerkes* (Vienna, 1934). Other books in which Schenker's analytical technique has been developed: Katz, *Challenge to Musical Tradition* (Knopf, 1945). (Miss Katz applies the Schenker technique also to the post-romantic period, while Schenker himself limited the application of his system to the classical and romantic period.) Dr. Felix Salzer, *Sinn und Wesen der abendländischen Mehrstimmigkeit* (Vienna, Saturn Verlag 1935), applies the Schenker technique to the music from the eleventh to the sixteenth century.

⁵ Schönberg and Schenker: see Schönberg's *Harmonielehre*, p. 384 (3rd ed.).

⁶ Schenker contributed eighteen critical essays to Maximilian von Harden's *Zukunft* (vol. I–XIX). Other articles appeared in the *Musikalisches Wochenblatt* (edt. Fritsch, Leipzig) between 1890–95. (This completes the list of Schenker's literary output.)

⁷ The personal source of this story is Schenker himself.

⁸ Schenker's monograph on *Beethoven's Ninth Symphony*. This is a highly instructive work—far more comprehensive in its viewpoints than Schenker's later theoretical writings. Its outstanding qualities lie in the current inferences regarding *performance* which Schenker draws from certain traits of the inner nature of the composition; motivations of this or that *accelerando*, *ritardando*, degrees of dynamics, etc. Though this viewpoint has of course always more or less been taken into consideration in most essays in musical analysis (in recent years particularly and more consistently by H. T. David in his analysis of Bach's *Musical Offering*, 1945), Schenker, I think, was the first to adopt it systematically. This aspect of the Ninth Symphony analysis gives reason to presume that Schenker's often promised (see f. ex. MW I, 71) but never published treatise on *The Art of Performance* (*Die Kunst des Vortrags*) would perhaps have had to be counted, together with the essay on *Ornamentik*, among his most serious and valuable contributions to music theory.

⁹ *Grove* erroneously gives Wisniowczy (a little town ca. 20 miles from Podhayze) as Schenker's birthplace, and 19th June, 1868, as his birthdate. All other musical dictionaries follow *Grove* as regards Schenker's birthtown but are at some variance as regards his birth and death dates; Thompson: 10th June, 1868–14th Jan., 1935. Macmillan, Baker and Slonimsky (*Music since 1900*): 19th June, 1868–22nd Jan., 1935.

¹⁰ Schenker contra Bruckner: NMT II, 137; *Zukunft*, vol. XIX, 262.

¹¹ Bruckner as a teacher: see Dika Newlin (*Bruckner, Mahler, Schoenberg*, p. 50, 1947); also Guido Adler, *op. cit.*, pp. 6–8.

¹² Shirlaw: *The Theory of Harmony*; the only existing full exposition of the theoretical works of J. P. Rameau.

¹² Tobias Matthay, *First Principles* (1905); *Musical Interpretation* (1913). B. McEwen, *Phrasing* (1910?); *The Thought in Music* (1912). This school of thought is characterized by its definitions of technical notions such as the "phrase", strictly from the viewpoint of the interpreter's psychology, and by its effort to get away from the static idea of musical form which it claims to be typical of nineteenth century theory. Its endeavours "to take movement into account" show strong leanings in the direction of the philosophy of Henri Bergson (*Time and Free Will, Creative Evolution*, etc.), an indebtedness repeatedly acknowledged in McEwen's *Thought in Music*, pp. 11, 25.

¹⁴ Schenker and Kurth, Halm, etc.: cf. Federhofer, *op.cit.* (see note 4).

¹⁵ The harmonic viewpoint in phrase construction is a secondary one: cf. McEwen, *op. cit.*, pp. 100, 102. Take as an example the finale of Beethoven, Op. 18, No. 2: both the antecedent and the consequent of the first eight measure period end on the dominant. The consequent hence can from a harmonic point of view be regarded as in no way more conclusive than the antecedent was; yet it must be regarded thus from the viewpoint of phrase construction. Similarly the following period answering the first eight measures with a modulation to E minor by way of B $\frac{7}{8}$, does not harmonically "close" these first sixteen measures—yet again, it does complete the double period they form from the viewpoint of phrase construction.

¹⁶ Criticism of the analysis of sonata-form in terms of exposition, development, etc., and 1st, 2nd theme, etc.: a very characteristic example: Donald Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis* (vol. I–VI) and more particularly *The Integrity of Music* (1941), p. 320 ff. Also: Alfred Einstein in *Mozart, His Character, His Work* (1945), p. 170. (Einstein's attitude toward "analysis", however, may be turned against Schenker as well as against any other more orthodox methods of analysis.)

An eighteenth-century theorist who analyses sonata-form primarily in terms of its tonal plan is August Friedrich C. Kollmann, 1756–1829 (*Essay on practical musical composition*).

¹⁷ For early expositions of Schenker's Urlinie doctrine see: TW I (1921), p. 22 ff., TW II, pp. 3–6, III, 22–25, V, 24–46; MW I, 185 ff., 201 ff.; the first systematic demonstration of the ideas developed in the MW and the TW are to be found in the UT.

¹⁸ Donald Tovey, "Melody" (in *Articles from the Encyclopædia Britannica*, O.U.P., 1944).

¹⁹ The ascending leading-note resolution in the cadence, according to Schenker, has found its way into music only through harmony. Schenker's theory, of course, is tenable so far as monophonic music such as Gregorian chant, Byzantine chant, etc., is concerned. The cadence here in almost every case is to be understood in its literal sense: as a dropping of the melody. However, as regards the cadential formulas favoured in early polyphonic music Schenker's theory does not work. For if it were right, the ascending leading-note in the cadence should logically occur in the middle part, and the descant should descend. Yet the truth is, that while in two cases out of fifty, it may do so, the remaining forty-eight cadences will be found to use an ascending progression from the penultimate note to the final in the descant (cf. Lowinsky's "Survey of the Development of Cadential Formulas from the Thirteenth to the Sixteenth Century", *Musical Quarterly*, XXXI, 2).

I

"IN 1935", Karl Geiringer tells us in *Grove's Dictionary*, "shortly after Heinrich Schenker's death the city of Vienna erected a monument in his honour, bearing the following significant inscription provided by Schenker himself:

'Hier ruht, der die Seele der Musik vernommen, ihre Gesetze im Sinne der Grossen verkündet, wie keiner vor ihm'

('here lies one who comprehended the soul of music and preached its laws in the spirit of the great, as none before him')."

The fact is that Schenker was laid to rest very quietly in the Jewish cemetery, and the city of Vienna never did erect a monument in his honour; nonetheless, the text to the presumed monument is undoubtedly of Schenker's making, and it is of value because there is concentrated in it a summary of Schenker's claims to posterity which is remarkable both in its conciseness and completeness.

As we have set ourselves here the task of re-examining these claims, we may perhaps first raise the question why such a re-examination should be desirable at this time. Among musicians Schenker's musical theories have acquired a certain esoteric fame, which has been smouldering now for over twenty years, unable to break into the open. However, other outstanding theoretical works of the Viennese school to which Schenker belongs (or from which he comes) share the fate of Schenker's works: they were not reprinted because of the paper shortage and the general disorganization of the war period. Most of Schenker's books are not even represented in the larger public libraries. Informative articles on Schenker in musical dictionaries and other cyclopedic works^{1*} are scarce and mostly inadequate to satisfy current curiosity. There exists, to my knowledge, no public conservatory even in the German-speaking countries that has ever adopted Schenker's analytical method. Neither is there any available English translation² of Schenker's books.³ The interest in his works has been kept alive by his pupils and disciples (among them: John Petrie Dunn, Anthony van Hoboken, Oswald Jonas, Hermann Roth, Hans Weisse, Otto Vrieslaender, Felix E. v. Cube—founder and present head of the *Schenker Institute* in Hamburg—and Adele Katz) through the publication of a number of articles and books⁴ based on Schenker's analytical method.

Wherever in musicological quarters one knocks at the door with the "Schenker-approach", the door is opened always with respect, but with more or less undefined reservations. The criticism principally runs in two directions. First: an accusation of coldness and dogmatism. All technical analysis, however, is by necessity "cold", inasmuch as cool detachment is required to retrace and secure through the intellect that which has been grasped in the intuition of the moment. Analysis is, in fact, frozen interpretation. It is dogmatic inasmuch as it can never dispense with some given *norm* to which to relate the individual harmonic, melodic or formal entities; at least so far musical analysis has never progressed without such norms. The second principal objection against Schenker has to do with his attitude toward music history and his artistic *parti-pris*. Schenker, like Riemann and other theorists, sees in the major and minor tonality that characterizes the period of, let us say, the three great B's, the crowning and final achievement of the musical art. He condemns all music that transcends the technique of that era and regards all musical styles which preceded it as but preliminary steps, mere preparatory stages. This is the view that is held by Schenker's whole-hearted followers such as Dr. Salzer and Miss Katz. We live, they say—with or without

* Numbered notes are to be found under "References" on preceding pages. [Ed.]

acknowledgment to Oswald Spengler—in a low-tide of artistic production, compensated by a high-tide of historiography, a conservation of the past through theoretical understanding. This era of true theoretical understanding, they contend, was first inaugurated by Schenker. According to his own statement, Schenker wrote “the *first* text-book of music”;* he was the first to have represented Beethoven's *Eroica* “in its true content”;† and Brahms was “the *last* master of composition”.‡ Other followers of Schenker, among them Mr. Federhofer, would face the problem with the proviso that whether Schenker's attitude toward music history be accepted or not, this will not affect the value of his descriptive music theory. It deserves to be mentioned also that Arnold Schönberg expressed a quite similar opinion when he said⁵ that “though . . . his ideas be far removed from Schenker's as regards the present and future of music, they would come just the closer to each other as regards the past”. This is the position taken by many critics, even the most unbiased ones. Walter Riezler, for example—a sectary of Schenker to some point (see the introduction to his *Beethoven*)—rejects as “extremistic” Schenker's later works. Or Roger Sessions in his admirable article on Schenker, though he takes offence in the *Kontrapunkt* at some slightly “sophistical arguments . . . against the attempt to revive the modes of the mediaeval church as a basis of musical syntax”, believes himself quite free to approve not only of most of the balance of the *Kontrapunkt* but also of other early works of Schenker including the *Harmonielehre*.

Some of Schenker's writings have been accepted, while others—usually his later works—have been rejected, either for their unhealthy conservatism or their unyielding dogmatism. I am convinced that Schenker's case can come to no happy conclusion this way. Schenker's work must be accepted or rejected in its entirety. The dogma on which Schenker's descriptive music theory is based cannot be judged apart from his outlook on music history. To show the consistency with which this outlook manifests itself throughout all his works is the principal aim of the present essay. In addition to this critical survey, it is the desire of the writer to satisfy two other purposes: to introduce Schenker's works to readers not now familiar with them, and to provide the specialist with a corrected exposition of the widely scattered biographical and bibliographical material regarding the man and his musicology.

EARLY WORKS

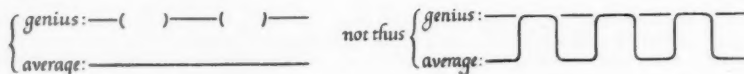
It will not be necessary to give here a detailed account of those works where Schenker's position expresses itself most directly, such as in a number of articles—concert reviews, critical essays, etc.—which he contributed to literary and musical magazines.⁶ One finds him there still deeply involved in the Brahms-Wagnerian feud, polemizing against everything that goes with Wagner

* “Das erste Lehrbuch der Musik”, subtitle to vol. III of the *Neue Musikalische Theorien und Phantasien* (will be hereafter referred to as NMT III, for other abbreviations see references, note 3).

† “zum ersten mal in ihrem wahren Inhalt dargestellt”, subtitle to Schenker's monograph on Beethoven's third Symphony.

‡ Schenker's dedication to Brahms in his monograph on Beethoven's ninth Symphony.

(for example: Leoncavallo), while praising to the heavens innocent operas like Mascagni's *Rantzau* or Smetana's *Bartered Bride*—much like Nietzsche had played off Bizet's *Carmen* against the Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Schenker was not only in personal contact with Brahms, but it seems indeed that the latter was not altogether unsusceptible to Schenker's partisanship in his favour—if one may believe an unconfirmed story,⁷ telling us that Brahms once commented, with regard to Schenker's articles, that "the young Schenker is nowadays the only one that writes about *music*". Brahms also recommended Schenker's early compositions to Simrock in Berlin, where they were published. It goes without saying that "the young Schenker" shows little sympathy for the "hermeneutic affect-babblers" ("hermeneutische Affektschwätzer und Ausdruckskraftmeier"). A spokesman of "absolute music", he finds in his analysis of Beethoven's ninth Symphony⁸ absolute musical laws, inner musical necessities, where others would understand the dramatic programme as the form-determining factor (e.g. the recapitulation of the thematic material of the first three movements at the beginning of the fourth movement). Schenker misses no occasion to protest against the emancipation of the dramatic content from the logic of the musical form. In the *Lied* he criticizes the emancipation of the text-accent which is typical of a newer school (though in pursuance of a very much older school, namely that of the Gregorian chant!), and he insists upon the strict superiority of the metrical accent (see, for example, TW I, 46, Schubert *Ihr Bild*). The musical art work is to be understood in the light of its own inner logic; the existence of any musical idea finds its justification for Schenker only in its function within its formal environment. There is no room in this outlook on music for a classification into "schools" or "styles"; recognition of melodic characteristics, such as modal traits; or the acknowledgement of isolated harmonic phenomena, such as for example "Neapolitan Sixths," etc. Melodic peculiarities, such as the frequent employment of augmented seconds in Smetana, are not led back to the suggestive influence of Gypsy-modality, but like everything in music they are explained as the inevitable results of eternal musical laws, *semper idem sed non eodem modo*! The musical master work—the work of the genius—in which these laws are fulfilled, has been brought into being in a vacuum. Schenker not only denies all folkloristic roots of Western music ("may we at last put it clearly that where art begins, the tale of the 'people' has to come to an end!") NMT II, 46, similarly also III, 15 and 172), but he also rejects the idea of any possible indebtedness of the "genius" to the multitude of his more humble brothers, that is to say, the possibility of any gradual development by a process of selection from common to uncommon. Schenker proceeds in good earnest to illustrate this—side by side with technical musical examples—with the following diagram [NMT III, p. 2, Fig. 13]:



All this has a strongly Nietzschean flavour, last but not least by the frankness with which Schenker includes himself in the rare species of human beings represented by the upper line of the diagram. But when Schenker speaks of genius, he makes it plain that he means the German genius, and no other. And this is indeed only a logical result of Schenker's attitude toward music history: for, if one considers the time from the late seventeenth to the late nineteenth century as the only period in which true musical art flourished, one might as well restrict one's view to the corner which Germany had on music during that period. All too closely connected with such ideas are Schenker's political convictions; so closely indeed that one finds him giving pithy expression to these where one would neither expect nor desire it. But we shall not quote him here, rather leaving it to the reader to decide after he has looked through the introductory chapter of vol. I of the TW or the introduction to the EA—two random samples which, in style and spirit, could well have come from the pen of the Führer himself—whether he still will be able to isolate this aspect of Schenker's strange ideology altogether from his artistic doctrines. But the irony of Schenker's case was that due to his Jewish origin his works were placed on the black-list of the Third Reich.

Heinrich Schenker was born on 19th June, 1868, near Podhayze, Galizia,⁹ where his father was a country doctor; he died in Vienna on 14th January, 1935.

Having revealed his musical gifts while still in grammar school, Schenker toured Eastern Europe as a "prodigy"-pianist, on which occasion he came into personal contact with Carl Mikuli (Chopin's pupil and confidant), for whom he was privileged to give a private performance. Schenker settled with his family in Vienna at the age of 23, being required to earn a living, for his family as well as for himself, after the death of his father, by giving music lessons to wealthy Polish aristocrats. At the same time a scholarship from the Austrian emperor's private purse enabled him to complete his own studies in composition under Anton Bruckner.

A work which seems to have exerted great influence on Schenker's mind is C. P. E. Bach's "Essay" (*Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*). One encounters quotations from it throughout Schenker's works; in particular, *The Art of Improvisation* (MW I) and the *Beitrag zur Ornamentik* are entirely based on it. But beyond this, Schenker's writings are characterized far more by opposition to, than by continuation of, any established method. Schenker uses traditional theory to trample upon whenever the occasion admits, and before every leap into the new land of his own ideas. Often his polemics are aimed directly at his former master, Bruckner.¹⁰

It seems only natural that the instruction Schenker had received from Bruckner could be little to his taste. Bruckner was Wagnerian in the first place; but as a teacher he was extremely conservative.¹¹ He taught the old precepts, and then mocked at them. "These, gentlemen, are the rules. As soon as I have stepped out of the class-room, of course, I'll do it quite differently!" (In Bruckner's famous Austrian dialect: "Segns, meine Herren, does ist die Regel; wenn i rausgeh mach i's natirli ganz anders!" quoted in NMT I, 228, cf. also Guido Adler *Wollen und Wirken* (1935), p. 7.) To

remedy this conflict between theory and actual musical thought—which as a matter of fact is typical not only of Bruckner's but of nineteenth-century teaching generally—"to build a bridge between theory and praxis", "a real practicable bridge!" (NMT I, Vorwort), becomes the key-note of Schenker's endeavours. Bruckner taught in the tradition of the renowned Viennese theorist Simon Sechter, amongst whose pupils he had been at the Konservatorium. That is to say, Bruckner handed on to his students the theories of Rameau in the somewhat mechanized form in which they had come down to the nineteenth century through the Marpurg-Rameau system. Mechanized, because—as Shirlaw¹² points out in his exposition of Rameau's theories—they were "deprived of their *harmonic principle*". Sechter would apply Rameau's theories of root progressions to *altered*, as well as pure intervals (augmented and diminished fourths and fifths). It is important, however, to note that here we are confronted not only with a mere mechanization of Rameau's theories, but that this indiscriminating acceptance of diminished and augmented intervals as root progressions, meant also a very real and conscious step forward toward the *expansion* of the harmonic sense. Also one may note in this context that Sechter's theories have had considerable influence on Mahler and Schönberg (cf. Newlin, *op. cit.*, pp. 53 and 243 ff.). Hence one may readily guess that Schenker's antagonism to Sechter's ideas was directed against their progressive, rather than their mechanizing elements. Thus it was that Schenker returned to Rameau's "principle", to see in it not only the principle of all harmonic progression but to discover in it also the principle of all musical form.

* * *

What is form? For the nineteenth-century theorist form was thematic structure. A "given norm" was that of the sonata-form. Its denominator was "exposition, development and recapitulation", and its smaller units "phrases, periods, double-periods, etc.". I think it is the French theorist, Momigny (1780), who must be credited with first having introduced a systematic formal analysis in terms of "phrases". In Germany this was taken over by Lobe (1797-1881), and later concentrated upon with particular insistence by Hugo Riemann. The musical "norm", such as that of a phrase, is far more than just a convenient means for the analyst in the classification of musical forms. From the viewpoint of the interpreter it can become the idea of musical *momentum* itself. This aspect of the psychology of the "phrase" has been greatly stressed in recent times by a school of English theorists,¹³ foremost among them the eminent teacher Tobias Matthay and his pupil John B. McEwen. The latter compares the successive units of a phrase or period to the consecutive steps in the progress of a pedestrian. "The momentum acquired in the first step carries the walker on, although the second step is a self-contained and individual movement. Indeed, this idea of musical momentum . . . supplies the key to the understanding of the whole subject of phrase construction" (*Thought in Music*, p. 119). Perhaps it will be considered somewhat arbitrary that we mention here the Matthay school in connection with

Heinrich Schenker—who so far has rather been placed in a group with theorists such as Ernst Kurth, August Halm or K. Westphal.¹⁴ But ultimately what distinguishes the analytical approach of these men from an older method, also characterizes the English school from which we have just quoted: an effort to replace the traditional methods of form analysis “with its false ideas of dead disconnected segments of music, blocks or chunks . . .”^{*} by a designation of the impulse which welds the segments into an organic whole.

Similarly, as the first phrase of a period—the “antecedent”—receives its inner drive through reference to the “consequent” as its completion, so the “excessive” material of the “prolonged” phrase or the “elision” acquires its momentum by being related to the “normal” phrase as the most self-contained, most perfect symmetry. On a larger scale, also, the procrustean bed of sonata-form could psychologically be turned to this end: the components of any free form may be related to a hypothetical whole, a basic structure such as that of the *Sonata-form*—and their formal function can thereby be determined. Though the functions that have thus been thought out will perhaps not exactly correspond to those visualized by the composer, still this sort of musical computation may be able to provide in the mind of the interpreter or the listener a satisfactory background and a denominator for the movement as brought forth by the energy or caprice in the mind of the composer. Of course, the viewpoints of our hypothesis will matter the less, the less actual reality it has in the composition under consideration.

It is, however, hard to understand why just those viewpoints which, one would think, suggest themselves most strongly to the interpreter as the denominator of musical momentum, should never have been systematically adopted in the analysis of formal functions, namely that of harmonic tension (the reference of dissonance to consonance), and that of melodic tension (the reference of melodic energy to melodic gravity). Distinctions such as between phrases and periods, etc., of course, are dependent in part upon the *cadence*. But far more important here than the harmonic or melodic viewpoint is the consideration of the time element, of *abstract time-proportions*.¹⁵ This is even more true of an analysis in terms of thematic structure: its patterns or designs, and their inner logic, are abstract formulas taking for granted the tonal plan on which they are built. Definitions of sonata-form, primarily in terms of tonal structure, are extremely rare in the nineteenth century. Only now at a moment when musical composition is just beginning to demonstrate that tonality is not to be regarded as the most important, the indispensable, factor of formal unity, musicologists have begun to express the conviction that in classical music—from which we derive our formal norms such as the sonata-form—tonal structure is everything. They point out that an examination of eighteenth-century theory discloses surprisingly few rules concerning the number and arrangement of the themes in sonata-form; while on the other hand, there seem to have been very definite conventions regarding the plan of the tonal relations.¹⁶

* Matthay, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

It would be interesting to examine to what extent writers such as Křenek (*Music Here and Now*, 1939) and Max Graf (*Modern Music*, 1946) were acquainted with the theories of Schenker when, speaking of sonata-form, they described it in such phrases as a "static harmonic scaffolding" (Křenek), "supporting and regulating harmonic props . . . that carried the high vaults and gables of the classic symphony" (Graf); or when Křenek likened the "tonal style" to "a type of architecture in which the basic arrangements of supporting columns appear again and again without detriment to the variable and fanciful execution of the building founded on them". For here we have, indeed, a formal conception which—although undoubtedly always having been a part of the consciousness of the interpreter, but never adequately expressed and systematized by descriptive music theory—formed the starting point of Schenker's analytical approach. The "static harmonic scaffolding", the "supporting and regulating props", become the first and last word in Schenker's idea of musical form, the *background* against which, he thinks, all form must ultimately be envisaged. But there is a great difference between only being aware of a harmonic substructure (as was every nineteenth-century theorist to some extent) and systematically relating to it the superstructure of motives and themes in their smallest details. It is, in fact, extremely difficult to find the means logically to identify those "harmonic props" in which the musical movement finds repose and from which it flows; and still more difficult to determine their relative structural stability by relating them to each other.

NMT III: DER FREIE SATZ

(A) BASIC HARMONIC PROGRESSION—THE BACKGROUND OF ALL HARMONY

It is exactly this which Schenker undertakes in the doctrine of the "Urlinie" ("primordial line"),¹⁷ and the "Ursatz" ("primordial structure"), into which his notion of a musical "background" was to crystallize in the last volume of his *magnum opus* (NMT III, 1935). As early as 1910—in the NMT II, p. 205—Schenker uses for the first time, I think, and quite casually it would seem, the word "background" ("Hintergrund"). This occurs when he reduces a passage from Mozart's Symphony K.425 to two major thirds to represent its melodic-harmonic essence, its "embryonic state so to speak", "the background against which all later events must be viewed". Schenker does not actually think of chronology when he speaks of "later events", nor even necessarily of the sequence in which these events took shape in the composer's mind. What he actually suggests is a hierarchy of the "supporting columns" we have just referred to—the relative structural self-containedness of any moment in the course of a composition. From a harmonic viewpoint certainly this self-containedness is greatest whenever a "key" has established itself, as determined by a full close on a "tonic" or as only suggested by a half-close on an "intermediate dominant", "mediant", or "sub-mediant". All movement in classic music may be said to drive toward, or stem from, such full- and half-closes setting off one key from another: they are the "harmonic props" of the "sub-structure" of sonata-form. The *Ursatz* accordingly becomes an outline of

dominant and third relationships, on a huge scale, viewed in the light of an ever-present consciousness of the home tonic. All tonal events seem drawn together more closely from such a viewpoint. What appeared formerly as modulation from one key into another, is interpreted in the *Ursatz* only as a "tonicalization" of one or the other region of the basic tonality; what formerly appeared as "tonics" (I), "dominants" (V) or "mediants" (III) of a new key, is understood here only as the "carrying out" of a triad $\frac{5}{1}$ built on one of the degrees of the scale of the home-key. The notion of the "harmony" thus assumes a broader, more abstract meaning; it has emancipated itself entirely from every consideration of the time-factor (NMT I, 196). A "harmony" is one of the moments of harmonic repose making up the "substructure". It is essentially determined by the fact that it communicates—through the ladder of 5th and 3rd relationships—with other such moments of repose, be they suggested by a single tone, or carried out by several chords harmonically bound together into a triad or triadic fragment or stepwise building up such a triadic unit.

Ultimately, however, the final tonic is the only moment of complete repose, the only moment which calls for no further movement. The degree of the relative stability of all other harmonic bases by which it is delayed, depends upon the directness with which they are related to it through the fifth or third. Hence a triadic structure made up of tonic-fifth, tonic-third, and tonic, suggests itself as the basic harmonic structure—the "*Ursatz*" to which the tonal scheme of every self-contained musical form must be related. All harmonic tensions and all formal adventures, all excursions into strange tonal territory, are to be understood as an outgrowth and suspension of this basic progression I-(III)-V-I. This is, indeed, the tonal scheme to which that of every sonata-form—or the older dance-forms from which sonata-form derived—can easily be reduced.*

The career that leads from the basic harmonic progression into the full-fledged composition represents itself as a twofold process: on the one hand, a melodic filling in and prolongation of the structural framework explicable in terms such as "neighbouring notes", "appoggiaturas", etc.; on the other hand an expansion of the harmonic framework by reproduction of its intervals, which is to say, by harmonically "carrying out" either the "structural", or the "prolonging" tones. The function of the detail thus is amphibious in its nature; it depends entirely upon the contextual sphere from which it is viewed. Understood on the largest scale (in the light of the "background"), everything that happens from the moment the dominant of the basic harmonic progression has been reached in the course of a composition, must be understood as on its way, so to speak, to the final tonic—as fulfilling and prolonging an undivided impulse. But viewed on a smaller scale (in the light of the "foreground", or what might be described as an intermediate viewpoint between background and foreground: the "middleground"), any of the tones that has either fulfilled

* It is of little importance to note here that Schenker, as may be expected, avails himself of the *overtone-series* as an argument for his doctrines.

or prolonged the realization of this impulse may turn out to be itself a structural footing for further prolongations.

Once in possession of this conception of the "basic harmonic progression" and its branches and sub-branches of fifth- and third-spaces, Schenker is prepared to pursue the harmonic function of every smallest detail. In innumerable examples (see note 17) Schenker shows us by means of diagrammatic representation how every tone of a passage, every chroma, every dissonance of the detail can be understood as filling in or as modifying in one way or another a triad or triadic fragment, if it is not itself an integral part of these smallest harmonic units. The triad or triadic fragment that has thus been sifted out, will be related in turn by thirds or fifths to another similarly formed triadic unit, or its fundamental note will be understood to participate—together with the fundamental notes of other units of the same order—in a stepwise motion, establishing a triadic unit of a higher order, or contributing to the modification of such a motion. Triadic complexes are related to each other; smaller ones are integrated within larger ones, weaving thus a logical web of dominant and third relationships between the tonic and dominant, and between the dominant and tonic of the basic harmonic progression.

In order, however, to identify these two focal points of a composition Schenker is in need of yet another principle to supplement the one of which we have so far treated. The dominant will occur not only once in the course of a composition but several times; indeed hundreds of times, in the tonal structure of a larger symphonic form. In a classic symphony the dominant usually is the second or third harmony to be struck after the tonic, even within the first phrase; while (perhaps after a passing return to the tonic) that same phrase may come to its conclusion with a half-close again on the dominant. Schenker may well relate the progression into the first "intermediate" dominant as a "subordinate motion" to the greater structural stability of the half-close; and he also may thus relate a dozen or more of other dominants to "the" dominant of the basic harmonic progression. But since, as we have seen, Schenker has entirely emancipated the viewpoint of structural stability from that of stability in time, how can he determine the relative structural value of several moments which in their harmonic status are identical with each other? The rhythmic viewpoint being eliminated, the harmonic viewpoint exhausted, there remains yet the viewpoint of melody.

(B) URLINIE—THE BACKGROUND OF ALL MELODY

If all harmony be referable to triads or triadic motions, and if melody—as Tovey puts it—be "the surface of a series of harmonies",¹⁸ then certainly also any melodic unit must be demarcated by one of the intervals found in the triad or its inversions. This is one of the principal assumptions upon which Schenker's melodic analysis is based. Another one is that the true element of melody is the diatonic *scale*: the simplest possible, the most natural melody would have to proceed stepwise in a diatonic line of uniform direction. All the flights of melody, then, must be related to diatonic lines proceeding stepwise through the given spaces of a third, fifth, octave, sixth or fourth.

These are the smallest units of melody. And much as in the prolonged basic harmonic progression, the corner-tones of such lines must be thought to form among themselves similar lines—melodic units of a higher order—which will have to be related in turn to the largest melodic unit, the *Urlinie*.

The *Urlinie* being the ideal of melodic unity in view of which Schenker determines the diversity actually comprising the melodic structure of a composition, every tone of the *Urlinie* represents a moment of the greatest melodic stability within a larger area; just as every "harmony" in the prolonged basic harmonic progression represented a moment of harmonic stability. The *Urlinie* accordingly is not to be confused with melody, but rather must be understood as an antithesis to the exuberances of melody, an antithesis to melodic energy. This is why Schenker conceives of the *Urlinie* as proceeding in a *descending* line, as one may reasonably affirm that melodic gravity has always been felt to reside in the low-points rather than the high-crests of melody.¹⁹ The *Urlinie* in the course of a composition drops from the tonic octave, fifth, or third, down to the final tonic and thus receives its own impulse—an impulse which leads the melodic structure on from one point of repose to another, and which is spent the moment the final tonic has been reached. This moment, of course, must coincide with the occurrence of the final tonic of the basic harmonic progression. The tones of the *Urlinie* and those of the basic harmonic progression and its prolongations must be thought to form a counterpoint to each other, and—since both, the former as well as the latter, represent points of repose—a consonant counterpoint. It is this circumstance which Schenker claims determines in part the hierarchy of the basic harmonic progression—his choice of the focal dominant of the *Ursatz* being dependent upon the *Urlinie*, and vice versa, the selection of the *Urlinie*-tones being dependent upon the selection of the focal dominant of the *Ursatz* (cf. MW I, 192).

The reader may turn to any of the works expounding Schenker's theory (see note 4) for a detailed exposition of the ingenious technical means by which Schenker succeeds in adapting the actual tonal structure of a composition to the ideal framework of the *Ursatz*; and how he explains, on the one hand (in terms of "preliminary ascents", "octave transpositions", etc.) the melodic material which diverts the melodic outline from its continuous descent, or on the other hand defines (in terms of "neighbouring notes", "unfoldings", etc.) the material which surpasses the prescribed triadic spaces. The *Urlinie*-tone, if not found at the top of a unit, will be found at its bottom (in which case the melodic motion transcending the *Urlinie* will have to be regarded as an "unfolding"); or it will not be found at all, in which case it will have to be supplied by our imagination—or let us say, by our sense of melodic unity. From this viewpoint Schenker does nothing worse than any theorist who would slip a fundamental note V below every VIIth chord, when in the NMT III, Ang. fig. 156, 1 he asks us to hear at the beginning of the 6th *Fugue* from Bach's "48" an a¹ as "implied" upper fifth to the d¹ with which Bach's *Fugue* really begins, in order to adjust the melodic scheme of the *Fugue* to the *Urlinie*-scheme 5-1; or when (NMT III, Ang. fig. 132, 2) he relates bars 33-41 of Chopin's *Mazurka* in G minor, Op. 24, 1 to a d² which is not present at all; or when in the Largo of

Bach's *Sonata* for violin solo, No. 3 in C, bar 7, 4th crotchet, he sees himself compelled (MW I, 66) to substitute in his mind (and accordingly in his diagrammatical representation) a d² (the obligatory penultimate tone of the Urlinie) for the b² given in Bach "because circumstances of melodic detail here prevented Bach from actually using the basically necessary d²". This, indeed, is one of Schenker's indispensable devices: to "extract" fundamental tones (J. S. Bach, *Passacaglia* for organ in C minor, NMT III, Ang. fig. 20) and "imply" tonic resolutions (NMT I, 322 ff.) where they are not present.

All this must be understood as a result of Schenker's attempt to grasp the complexities of harmonic and melodic structure by resolving them into simplicity and unity. This is the purpose of the *Ursatz* doctrine. It is in this sense that Schenker *subordinates* all motivic and thematic viewpoints to the principle of the Urlinie, and that he tells us that "the Urlinie carries in its lap the seeds of all melody" (TW I, 22 ff.); in the same sense, indeed, in which it had to be understood when Zarlino said that "unity is the source of all numbers" and of all harmony. Schenker's *Ursatz* doctrine is not an attempt in any way to explain the psychological process of composition or to belittle the emotional or other factors involved in this process. Schenker does not "attribute to various laconic musicians (Bach, Haydn, Beethoven) intentions which they would probably have disowned". He does not claim the *Ursatz* consciously or "subconsciously" to be present in their minds. If some of Schenker's followers—among them Miss Katz—have interpreted him thus "in the inevitable mode of fashionable psychology", they have misinterpreted him and have been justly criticized therefore (*Music and Letters*, XXVIII, 4). Schenker's analysis is not so much concerned with the subconsciousness of the musician, as perhaps with "the subconsciousness of music". The question, however, whether Schenker's particular mode of approach may be deemed a happy one we shall now have to consider.

II

"Every composer", writes Roger Sessions (see note 4), "is aware through his own experience of the reality of a 'background' in his musical construction that goes beyond the individual traits of melody and harmony which constitute the most immediately perceptible features of his work. He is conscious, that is to say, of a type of movement which takes place gradually and over large stretches and which embodies itself in the need which he feels, say at a given moment, for such and such a high note, or for this or that particular harmonic or melodic intensification." "But", Sessions continues, "there are two fundamental objections to such a conception of Schenker's 'Urlinie' and 'Ursatz'." The first of Sessions' objections, with which we essentially agree, is that he speaks of the *Ursatz* as being "far too primitive as a description of the actual events which constitute a musical work, or the sensations and apperceptions that constitute the ultimate comprehension of that work". Riezler's criticism of the *Ursatz* doctrine (see note 4) is not unlike the one just quoted. He takes great pains to show by analogy with the other arts that an analysis of any art work proceeding from a given framework can never give evidence of specific traits contained within the framework without

supplementing the basic structural principle by specific ideas such as are found in music in the concepts of motives, rhythmical patterns, etc.

Essentially Schenker's analysis of the pitch-design and harmonic unity of musical composition operates with only two principal ideas:

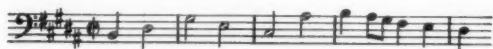
- (1) All harmony must be related to the triad.
- (2) All melody must be related to the scale.

This is indeed too primitive an apparatus for the demonstration of the inner necessities with which a composition follows its course. Schenker may be able to prove the inner necessity of everything he accepts; but, as long as his analysis is restricted to these two basic principles, he cannot do so without arbitrariness, since the choice of the Urlinie-tones and of the basic harmonic progression already admits of a freedom which, despite the mutual dependence between the former and the latter, leaves it up to Schenker to take the law into his own hands. Where Schenker refrains from doing this, his choice is of course—though he would deny it—really based on the consideration of time-stabilities and other established viewpoints of musical form (the focal dominant of the *Ursatz*, for example, being mostly found toward the end of the "exposition" at the cadence of the "2nd theme" on the dominant, or in the "development part"). Often, however, one cannot help suspecting that Schenker could as well prove the inevitability of the very opposite of that which he has just proved; and one feels indeed reminded of Goethe's Mephistopheles, when he says:

"Then some philosopher steps in, and he
will demonstrate to you it so must be:
the first was so, the second so
and thus the third and fourth are so;
and if no first or second had been there,
the third and fourth one would be never.
All students prize that everywhere!"

Schenker's conception of melodic continuity is founded, to start with, upon a fantastic hypothesis: his representation of the ideal of the "movement that takes place gradually and over large stretches" by a *straight line*, is absolutely untenable (why not at least a curve?). Moreover, Schenker entirely ignores a viewpoint which should be considered of great importance: the melodic continuity (by likeness or by contrast), which results from the *intrinsic* nature of an individual melodic idea (rising line followed by descending line, etc.). As regards Schenker's analysis of the smaller entities of melody: his definitions of their triadic structure,

From: J. S. Bach, "48", vol. II, No. XXIII.



Schenker's analysis of this theme: MW, I, 97.



as well as his contractions of widely spread melody-tones into their conjunct "essentials", do not analyse melody proper at all.

Schenker, however, does *not* stick to his two fundamental ideas, but as he proves the inner necessities of this or that passage, we find him taking recourse in other arguments which can in no way be deduced from the basic doctrines of the *Ursatz*. For example, in the harmonic structure of the melody quoted above, we are told by Schenker that Bach had to use the leading note $a\sharp$ (thereby creating the "5-6 exchange" $c\sharp-e-g\sharp$, $c\sharp-e-a\sharp$) in order to avoid the impression of parallel fifths ($b-d\sharp-f\sharp$, $c\sharp-e-g\sharp$). In exactly these terms Schenker explains many another passage, whether actual chord progressions are in question, or the connection of "harmonies" on a larger scale. Now while Schenker's basic doctrines might perhaps have been accepted as a self-contained system, here it becomes obvious that we are confronted with principles which cannot claim universal validity but are deduced from one particular style typical of one particular period of music history.

NMT II: KONTRAPUNKT

We have all familiarized ourselves with these principles in studying Fux' *Gradus ad Parnassum* and Richter's *Manual of Harmony*. Schenker has taught them to us in the II and I Volume of the NMT, his *Kontrapunkt* and the *Harmonielehre*. Schenker in the *Kontrapunkt* tells us (p. 15) that "rather than aiming to teach one particular style", he wants here "for the first time to acquaint the ear of the music student with the infinite world of basic musical problems" (*musikalische Urprobleme*). What Schenker actually does, however, is exactly what others have done before him and what most counterpoint text-books are doing to this date: he expounds the laws deduced from what is commonly called (though it never existed in the pure form in which it is being taught) the Palestrina-style. What Schenker really does "for the first time" is to find obedience to these laws, albeit in modified form, in modern compositions. His procedure can be described as follows:

- (a) Statement and motivation of the traditional rules of counterpoint.
- (b) Examples of violation of these rules in the "free style" of the classic masters.
- (c) Motivation of these violations through analysis of the "complications" responsible for such violations and reduction of the free progression into one obeying the laws of strict counterpoint by application of a method of reduction which is essentially the same as the one used in the *Urlinie* doctrine.

Schenker's reasoning in motivating the traditional rules (*i.e.* a) is extremely autocratic, never historical. But it is precisely in thus regarding the strict obedience to these rules not as characterizing a certain stage in the historical evolution of harmony but simply as the most natural treatment of the musical material, the simplest musical situation according to the laws of the "genius"—that Schenker may think himself justified to understand all musical situations (in which the rules of strict counterpoint are *not* obeyed) in the light of these

rules. He is thus able to regard them as modifications rather than contradictions, and to accept such modifications only to the extent that they can be rationally motivated. Schenker motivates (*i.e. b*), at times brilliantly, often less convincingly, the use of chromatic tones (not permissible in strict counterpoint); the use of large melodic skips in modern composition (distinguishing between actual skips to be understood as such, and those which are only to be regarded as "substitutes" for, or "inflations" of, smaller intervals). He motivates the "crushingly and cruelly beautiful" diminished fourths in the development-part of Mozart's G minor Symphony by adducing motivic, dramatic and any other viewpoints that might be apt to explain Mozart's daring progressions indirectly in the light of the laws of strict counterpoint, instead of for their own sake; in this manner preparing the way for the *semper idem* of the *Ursatz*.

NMT I: HARMONIELEHRE

The most important aspect in which the "free style" of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries distinguishes itself from the earlier "strict style", Schenker believes, is its expansion into larger forms. This expansion, however, would have been unthinkable without what Schenker defines as *the extension of the harmonic principle into melody*. It is this, as embodied in the organization of musical structure into well articulated harmonic units (described above in connection with the *Ursatz* doctrine), which made possible and called into life the larger systems of musical form. That harmonic sense is not only not present in the structure of a Gregorian melody but it does not even manifest itself in the counterpoint of the fifteenth and sixteenth century, where each part goes its most plausible course from note to note according to melodic viewpoints.

Upon this distinction between the viewpoint of melody (or counterpoint) and that of harmony great stress is placed in Schenker's *Harmonielehre*. This is undoubtedly quite a healthy reaction against the confusion of the two principles in the theories of Rameau—a reaction by the way which is typical of several other theoretical treatises of our day (Schönberg, *Harmonielehre*, see, for example, pp. 9-10; Kurth, *Grundlagen des linearen Kontrapunktes*). Schenker has much to say against Rameau and even more against Riemann ("who most unnecessarily has once again taken up Rameau's teachings and led them to their last possible consequences"); yet on its broader lines Schenker's method of harmonic reduction follows more faithfully that of Rameau than he would be willing to admit. Even in much of their small detail Schenker's chord definitions correspond often with those of Rameau—though to be sure, Schenker's definitions are more flexible, and in this sense more "functional" than Rameau's. Indeed even Schenker's distinction between harmonic and contrapuntal function (his principal argument against Rameau) may be found in a nutshell in the IVth chapter of the *Génération Harmonique* in Rameau's distinction between "harmonic" and "melodic progression".

Any such rigid distinction between harmonic and contrapuntal functions is in itself a most problematic undertaking. As regards both Schenker and

Rameau, the problems involved embody themselves in a conflict which we might summarize as follows: Schenker, like Rameau, regards melody as ultimately "subordinate" to harmony, and at the same time restricts harmony to the intervals of the triad. Now, just as the first viewpoint implies a tendency to understand all musical situations in their vertical aspect, so the second will lead to that distinction between "melodic" and "harmonic" function with which we have just met in both Rameau's and Schenker's theories. One of these two tendencies must get the better of the other; and with both Rameau and Schenker it is the former which wins. As for Rameau, the further we follow his works in their chronology, the more we find him tacitly resigning his distinction between "melodic and harmonic progression" in favour of a harmonic analysis of practically any formation known in his day—with the one concession, in respect of the restrictedness of harmony to the triad, that while all diatonic relationships for Rameau (*Démonstration du Principe de l'Harmonie*, 1750, p. 96) "recall the triple proportion" (i.e. fifth relationships), all chromatic relationships "recall the quintuple proportions" (i.e. third relationships). Schenker uses precisely that method of splitting up all "dissonant" (7th or 9th) chords into their triadic elements—or, conversely, the generation of dissonant chords by conjunction of triads—by which Rameau in his latest works (*Nouvelles Réflexions*, 1760) put into practice his ideas quoted above from the *Démonstration*. Schenker derives the scale from an imaginary structure of super-imposed fifths and the major triads erected thereon, and shows how every chromatic passing note can be analysed harmonically through this system. All this leaves one wondering how ultimately it can be reconciled with that basic distinction between "harmonic" and "melodic" function proclaimed in the first pages of the *Harmonielehre*; and whether the relative prevalence of one or the other function does not depend less upon objective circumstances than upon the subjective intensity of our harmonic sense; or—as it turned out in the *Ursatz*—upon the breadth of our horizon in viewing the detail.

But Schenker's harmonic analysis goes further, in every respect, than that of Rameau. In the first place, the material Schenker has to cope with has grown considerably more complex since Rameau's day. In dealing with all sorts of "altered dissonances" by "recalling the triple or quintuple proportions", Schenker fails to see that a point can be reached when, as Rameau would put it, "the principle will no longer be understood in its product" (*Démonstration, loc. cit.*). At such a moment we must either extend our idea of the "harmonically direct intelligible" (to use here a pet phrase of Moritz Hauptmann), or altogether resign the harmonic viewpoint. Schenker, on the contrary, not content with the splitting up of 7th and 9th chords into triadic fragments, goes so far as to assign, when necessary, to each of these fragments its own tonality. The result is that many quite innocent altered 7th and 9th chords are to be understood (if they can be understood at all) as the most absurd polytonal complexes. When Schenker claims that this method of harmonic analysis *simplifies* the theory of harmony, he claims too much. Only in one sense does it indeed conduce to simplification: any harmonic or melodic

structure can be regarded as derived from a "mixture" of this or that major or minor tonality (the latter in its purest form, with both low sixth and low seventh degree). All harmony and all melody may be conducted through the channels of the major and minor system.

III

This is a point which can hardly be stressed enough: for, here in the discussion of as early a work as the *Harmonielehre*, we have finally returned to the most important aspect of Schenker's conception of the *semper idem* in music, the aspect which is so closely bound up with his attitude towards music history.

CONCLUSIONS: SCHENKER'S POSITION IN HISTORY

Eternal supremacy of the major-minor system; immutability of the laws of counterpoint; alleged distinction between harmonic (structural) and melodic (prolonging and filling) functions and—closely allied with this—recognition of the triad as the sole directly intelligible harmony. These are the principles we have met with in the *Harmonielehre* and the *Kontrapunkt*, and lesser early works. I can, indeed, think of no other elements by which they would be supplemented in the *Ursatz* doctrine. The viewpoints of the earlier volumes of the NMT are welded together here into a system, and by this very systematization Schenker's outlook on music becomes still more one-sided than it was previously. The viewpoints stressed in the *Harmonielehre* and the *Kontrapunkt* become the sole denominator of musical form—in fact, of music—to the exclusion of all other possible viewpoints or of any consideration of what Schering would call the "sphere" that should be assigned to a composition and which should determine the viewpoints of our technical analysis. Schenker has become more rigid, but not more radical.

The *method of reduction* always has been, and will have to be, in some form or other, the method of musical analysis. Not every procedure of reduction, however, leads by necessity to the quintessence of the object in question. Why did Rameau's theory of the *fundamental-bass* succeed better in reducing chord progressions to their quintessence than any previous attempt? First, from the historical viewpoint, Rameau's fundamental-bass represents an intellectual advance over the teachings he had inherited—one may think particularly of the "rule of the octave" as taught, for example, by Keller, Gasparini, Mattheson, Campion and others. In his *Theory of Harmony* Shirlaw defines the rule of the octave as "a simple concise harmonic formula which prescribed for each note of the scale or key-system its appropriate harmonies". It was, in reality, far more than that: the first tentative expression of a feeling for the logical enchainment of dominant relationships. This feeling becomes articulate in Rameau's theory of the fundamental-bass.

The rule of the octave in Rameau's early teachings appeared—in keeping with the time-honoured tradition to view harmony from its bottom upwards—in the bass in form of a "figured bass";

Mattheson, *Kleine Generalbass-Schule*, 1735.
"Rule of the octave".



Rameau, *Nouveau Système*, 1726.
 "Rule of the octave".



Rameau's "fundamental bass" is but an inversion of this state of affairs.

Rameau, *Génération harmonique*, 1737.
Fundamental-bass
 (transposed from the original in G major).



"... cet basse fondamentale, l'unique boussole de l'oreille, ce guide inévitable du musicien, qui l'a toujours conduit dans toutes ses productions. . . ." (*Génération*, préface).

Rameau not only thinks one certain bass "most appropriate" to a certain melody tone, but he *imagines* this bass below the melody and "extracts" it from every harmony, whether actually present or not. If all the harmonic relations, at one moment, are mathematically expressed, Rameau's fundamental-bass will represent *unity*, or the number coming closest to unity—*i.e.* Rameau's theory of the fundamental-bass views all the components of a harmony as definite *multiples* of harmonic unity. This is carried but one step further by Schenker, and in this sense his *Ursatz* represents but one further stage of intellectual abstraction from the intuition of the rule of the octave. Schenker's *Ursatz*, in its harmonic aspect, traces the "fundamental-bass of fundamental-basses"; the principle applied by Rameau to individual chords is here applied to larger areas and, ultimately, to entire compositions.

Schenker, *Ursatz*, NMT III, Anh. p. 6.



"... die Urlinie ist die Sehrgabe des Komponisten . . . (TW I, 26) . . . dem Vortragenden ist sie . . . was dem Bergsteiger eine Landkarte ist" (MW I, 195).

But when Rameau in his *Traité* reduced all harmonic progression to dominant-tonic cadences (or, as Ph. E. Bach once put it maliciously, "reduced all music to full closes"), the idea of dominant relationships was alive; it was new and was presently to grow into one of the most powerful forces in music. It is not necessary to invoke here the history of the sonata-form and the history of harmony in order to say that by the time Schenker formulated his

doctrine of the *Ursatz*, most of this impulse was spent. The "harmonic props" of classic tonality and classic form, which had been foreshadowed so ingeniously by Rameau, had shrunk into a shadow of the past. Schenker by his abstraction of Rameau's fundamental-bass and the rules of strict-counterpoint to determine the harmonic and melodic unity of a musical structure, reduces music not to the quintessence of its being but to one point, so to speak, of its inner past. More precisely, his system provides a somewhat fantastic amalgamation of several such points—those which Schenker likes best and which he thinks represent the crowning and final achievements of the musical art.

Schenker's analytical system, then, is applicable to the fugue and sonata style of the eighteenth, up to the nineteenth and twentieth century—though here its sixteenth-century elements will always be more or less unreal; on the other hand, if applied to the music of the sixteenth century, its sonata elements will raise insoluble problems. Since, however, as we have pointed out previously, almost anything can be reduced to any hypothetical "system", Schenker's analysis may succeed as an end in itself even where the principles of the *Ursatz* be far removed from those governing the composition under consideration. The *Ursatz* doctrine at its worst, thus, does but "interpose . . . a scaffolding between the hearer and the work" (Sessions)—a thought structure more complex, more difficult to grasp in its inner "necessities" in just the proportion that the principles of the past, on which it is erected, have a lesser reality in the present. If, as Schenker claims (MW I, 188), "just as it is the task of the composer to evolve the foreground of a composition out of its background, it is inversely up to the performer or listener to retrace the process that leads from the foreground to the background", then his "bridge" between theory and praxis is not "a real practicable bridge", because it is a one-way bridge, and that in the wrong direction. It does not adapt music theory to musical composition but—and here again Schenker's own definition of the purpose of his "bridge" is characteristic enough—it leads back "from composition to theory" (NMT I, preface).

At its best, however, the *Ursatz* doctrine may claim to be something like an abstract of the *tradition* with which we are prone to approach any musical composition and any style. This is indeed one among the many psychological interpretations which Schenker himself (NMT III, 13) gives to the *Ursatz*. Anyone who has just become acquainted with the music of Scarlatti and Haydn, and has acquired a rudimentary knowledge of sixteenth-century polyphony, will continue to search in all other music for the essentials he has so far absorbed—no matter how overgrown they may be by new ways of musical thought. Only gradually will he be able to understand and accept the new for its own sake. The process the music student goes through in this respect is indeed not very much different from the course which music history has always followed, and which music theory should follow.

Through such a process Schenker never went. Instead of trying to understand the gradual emancipation of music from the rules of strict-counterpoint, in the light of the gradual expansion of the domain of the harmonically "directly intelligible", we have found him both in the *Kontrapunkt* and the *Harmonielehre*

interested not in the new, but rather in the problem how the new can be led back to the old. We have seen him utterly unaware of the fact that it is not always conducive to our understanding of the idiom of one period of history to explain it in terms of that of another. His dissection of altered 7th and 9th chords into their triadic elements, though it may succeed in showing "well-known relationships even where some would like to hear new and strange harmonies" (NMT I, 55), defines neither their contrapuntal origin (as in the conventional harmony text-book), nor their actual harmonic functions. Again, Schenker does not realize that by reducing the worldly melody leaps of a Richard Strauss to the stepwise progressions of strict-counterpoint, he is far from really "explaining" them.

When Beethoven and Haydn wrote their *Scottish songs*, Brahms the *Hungarian dances*, Dvořák his *Slavonic dances*, Rimsky-Korsakov the *Scheherazade*, their chief intention (in Schenker's interpretation) was "to test the strength of the major-minor system by bringing it in contact with other, inferior systems" (NMT II, 43). Schenker fails to see that every such encounter of our musical inheritance with fresh elements, represents one moment in the constant metamorphosis of the visage of melody and harmony and form. Not only does Schenker, by turning away from this process in order to find the same old truth everywhere, make life extremely monotonous; but, when it happens that he can no longer find in the present that shadow of the past to which he would forever bind music, he simply stands bewildered. The present then seems like a sudden breaking away from the past, a breaking of the "laws of the genius". This has been the experience of Schenker's followers—Miss Katz, for example, who, when trying the magic of her master's art on music outside the era of the three great B's (her analyses go from Bach to Schönberg), found herself much disappointed in her search for "third-" and "fifth-spaces" in Schönberg's later works—disappointed, however, not in her theories, but in Schönberg's music. Dr. Salzer, who has occupied himself with the polyphonic music previous to Bach, has been no more successful in his quest, nor does his attitude towards the inevitable conclusions he reached through his application of Schenker's analytical technique differ in any respect from that of his lady-colleague. This may be illustrated by the following significant statement which Salzer makes apropos a passage in Okeghem (*Sinn und Wesen der abendländischen Mehrstimmigkeit*, p. 211): "... whether the perpetual, aimless drifting about of such passages be intended in its effect by the composer, or whether we fail to perceive here the structural principle—in either case, such passages remain incomprehensible. . . . Our awareness of the incomprehensibility of a number of passages from Okeghem's works amounts to a definite renunciation of any complete understanding of the works of this period".

"We cannot hear music with the ears of the eleventh or the thirteenth or fifteenth century", says Salzer, "but are bound to hear it with those of the twentieth century". Although, as we have attempted to show, it would have been more correct for Schenker's followers to say that they hear music with the ears of the sixteenth and eighteenth century, Salzer gives us in these words a better key to the true psychological meaning of Schenker's music theory

than Schenker himself was ever able to do. I cannot refrain from commenting here again upon the remarkable Rameauishness of this attitude characterizing Schenker and his flock; their way of turning music history to their own account, or turning their theory against music history. It would be an intriguing task to elaborate here in full detail the points at which Schenker's *a posteriori* theory coincides with what two hundred years ago was a progressive, *a priori*, theory. For the parallels between Schenker and Rameau go far beyond their mutual agreement as to the subordination of melody to harmony, the restriction of harmony to the intervals of the triad, the subordination of minor to major, and the universal validity to be claimed by these ideas. Schenker's digressions into a cosmic-religious philosophy, his indulgences of a mysticism which is as vague as it is pretentious—and which therefore we have here wisely left out of the picture as far as possible—find congenial tendencies particularly in Rameau's latest works (e.g. *De nouvelles Réflexions sur la Démonstration du Principe de l'Harmonie*, 1752). In his autocratic manner of reasoning, Schenker certainly surpasses Rameau. Like Rameau, too, Schenker has a fancy for allegorical interpretations of numbers. Wondering why harmony should restrict itself to the triadic intervals which are found between the first five partials of the harmonic series, Schenker argues: "even the staff of musical notation restricts itself to 5 lines, because more would puzzle the eye"! With quite similar arguments, indeed, could Nicomachus Gerasenus convince the second-century reader of the excellence of the number 4 (there are 4 seasons of the year, 4 elements, 4 sciences—according to the *Quadrivium*—, 4 virtues, 4 modes of existence: angels, demons, animals and plants . . .).

It would be no less intriguing to place Schenker's theory more clearly in relief by contrasting it with what *to-day* may be considered a "progressivist" theory such as, for example, Arnold Schönberg's *Harmonielehre*: to point out in detail how the latter, in seeking an understanding of the new, delights in certain daring appoggiatura-chords in Bach or Mozart (*Harmonielehre*, p. 380 ff.), whereas the former would hasten, his eyes hidden behind the blinkers of contrapuntal functions, towards their resolution; and why Schönberg's attitude leads him to take recourse in the church-modes and other "exotic systems" in explaining such chords, while Schenker is led to reject the church-modes; to define how both prepare the way for the "expansion" of tonality in a diametrically opposed sense: Schönberg by freeing himself from the idea that every chromatic tone must be aimed toward a definite tonic (*Harmonielehre*, p. 113), Schenker (in NMT III), by referring the entire course of a composition to *one* tonic; to define the polarity of Schönberg's attitude toward modulation ("for, what matters in a modulation is not its *aim* but the *way*", *Harmonielehre*, p. 202), and that of Schenker ("the *aim* first! . . . without aim no content", NMT III, 18). But I am afraid the Schenker case is not interesting enough to deserve such detail.

* * *

In the course of this essay we have repeatedly compared Schenker with Rameau. We placed Schenker's attempt to approach and embrace a musical composition in its entirety—as an undivided impulse—on a level with the theories of Kurth and Halm; and we have compared Schenker's effort to break

away from the static ways of thought, and to understand music in its movement, to the teachings of Matthay and McEwen. We have pointed to the unmistakable traces which Schenker's conception of musical form has left in the post-Schenkerian literature, and the works of writers such as Graf, Křenek and Tovey. We have thus assigned Schenker a place in music theory which should not redound to his discredit—notwithstanding the circumstance that we have found ourselves compelled to reject Schenker's analytical method in all its phases as inseparably bound up with the fixed conservatism which characterizes his view of music history, and as therefore essentially sterile in tendency: a *negation*, rather than an explanation, of musical realities.

All methods of musical analysis which attempt to find simplicity and unity, where actually there is complexity and diversity, in musical structure, run the risk of such a *negation*. Those who read schemes of sonata-form into a composition whenever they find themselves confronted with suggestions of recapitulation, run that risk no less than those who would reduce all harmony to two or three basic types of chords. But undoubtedly this sort of thing has never before been carried to the point reached by Schenker's analysis of the tonal unity of musical composition. The merit, however, of Schenker's contribution to music theory lies not so much in his particular conception of the inevitable tonal course which he thinks every musical composition must follow, as in the *directness* with which he approaches that tonal course. In this respect the step leading from the traditional methods of abstract formal analysis, to Schenker's diagrammatic representations, reflects in the history of analytical method a progress well comparable to the development in musical notation, from the use of the Greek and Roman alphabet to the introduction of the *neumes*.

The question whether the Schenker-approach can be turned to use, and how it might be done, has had to remain outside the frame of our discussion. Certainly this end can be little served by still further "proofs" of the validity of the *Urlinie* (such as the statement just received from the *Schenker Institut* in Hamburg that they have definitely "succeeded in verifying the scientific foundation of the *Urlinie* on the basis of the latest results in physical research"!). As a matter of fact, I think it is precisely the *Urlinie* which constitutes the weakest part of Schenker's *Ursatz* doctrine and must first be radically re-organized, or entirely abandoned (a step which has already in effect been taken by Miss Katz). Perhaps Schenker's analytical method, then, will succeed in really *following* the tonal course of a composition, instead of only *making it follow* a prescribed tonal course. Schenker's notion of a musical "norm", and of the "normal", is, however, too rigid in every respect. The essentially problematical points in Schenker's analytical method are, as we have seen, deeply rooted in his theory of harmony—his rigid concept of the "harmonically direct intelligible" and accordingly of the conditions determining a "harmonic unit". Zarlino, Mersenne and Rameau have had great enough difficulty maintaining, against all common sense, the restriction of harmony to the triad; though supported, as it was, by the authority of the musical practice of the day. But since even this authority has now turned against their case, it must finally be dismissed.

Symphony No. 5 in B flat, Op. 63

BY

EDMUND RUBBRA

Adagio—Allegro energico

Allegro moderato

Grave—Allegro vivo

AN ANALYSIS BY THE COMPOSER

WHEN, at the end of 1941, I was called up for war service, my fourth Symphony was already finished, although not fully scored, and projects had been made for a fifth (choral) symphony. Preliminary sketches for this were actually noted down in 1942, but army life proved not to be the ideal milieu for symphonic thinking. The sketches were therefore put on one side until continuous thought was again possible, and what time I had was devoted to the writing of works in smaller forms (the *Soliloquy* for cello and small orchestra and the *Missa Cantuariensis* being the most important). In 1946 I was free to take up the abandoned threads, but my enthusiasm for a choral symphony had waned, and the sketches for it were turned into an independent setting for chorus and orchestra of Henry Vaughan's *Morning Watch*. In this year, too, I wrote a cello and piano Sonata, fully revised an earlier string Quartet and added a new finale, revised an early *Lyric Movement* for piano and string quartet, and wrote the *Three Psalms* for voice and piano: thus it was not until 1947 that I was able to turn my thoughts to a new, purely orchestral, symphony. This gap of six years between the last two symphonies was equal to the amount of time that covered the writing of all the previous four (from 1935 to 1941), and it had an enormous importance in determining the form and content of No. 5. When symphonies are written in quick succession the characteristics of each are usually the result of a *reaction* away from its predecessor: in other words, although they are independent works they are somehow different facets of one thought, and a knowledge of all is necessary to a *complete* understanding of one. But a gap of six years, a gap moreover spent in surroundings totally inconducive to musical thinking, was sufficient to obliterate the previous symphonic period, and when at last I came to grips with No. 5 I did so with no sense of reference to the other four. In fact, the reference was more to the chamber music that had occupied my thoughts before No. 5 was started in August, 1947.

This was reflected not only in the texture of the new Symphony, but in the greater polarisation of tonality. The cello Sonata and the string Quartet are unambiguously in G minor and F minor, and the tonal centre of No. 5 is clearly B flat. Such a clarity of tonality is *not* a characteristic of the other symphonies: No. 1 starts in B minor, B seeming to be the leading note of the C major with which the Symphony ends: No. 2 does likewise, starting in D minor and ending in E flat major: No. 3 is more clearly in a key, E major, but pushes out at the

end to the more (seemingly) majorish C sharp major, and No. 4 gets nearer to a definite key by implication rather than in actual fact. This clear tonality in No. 5 is emphasized (and the same process is more tentatively seen in No. 3) by making the keys of the four movements correspond to the notes of the tonic triad: *viz.* B flat, D, F (as a starting point) and B flat.

Formally the work is in the nature of a triptych, the three "panels" of which are as follows:

Adagio—Allegro energico : Allegro moderato : Grave—Allegro vivo.

From this it will be seen that the first movement, with its long *Adagio* introduction, exactly balances the final two movements (for these are played without a real break), the middle movement (a scherzo) affording the necessary bright relief. This formal balance is reflected, too, in the return, at the end of the work, of the motivating phrase played in the first few bars by a solo oboe.

I

The key of B flat is, at the beginning of the Symphony, arrived at obliquely by dramatic enharmonic harmonies scored for brass and kettle drum. The resolution of these two bars is upon the nearly-related key of E flat minor, but this is seen to be the subdominant of B flat minor when it supports a phrase the contours of which are clearly in the latter key.

The musical score is for the first movement, *Adagio*. It is written in B-flat major (three flats) and 4/4 time. The score consists of three staves. The top staff is for the Oboe, which begins with a melodic phrase consisting of augmented and perfect fourths. The middle staff is for Brass and Tympani, providing harmonic support with chords and a 'rall' marking. The bottom staff, likely for Bassoon or Cello/Bass, has dynamics like 'p', 'molto', 'f', and 'pp'.

The mingled augmented and perfect fourths in this oboe phrase form the basic melodic elements in the Symphony. When it is complete, at bar 10, its characteristics have been emphasized by appearing as counterpoint on the bassoon and in augmentation on cellos and basses: moreover the oboe, at bars 9 and 10, modifies its opening phrase by substituting major sixths for the perfect and augmented fourths, and this wider interval is important in later developments. At this point the violins enter for the first time with a phrase beginning (in the key of E flat) with the sixth to tenth notes of the oboe phrase (see Ex. 1), the accompaniment to it being compounded of the leaping sixth just introduced by the oboe and an inner pedal of B flat that, in spite of the introduction of new keys, keeps the music anchored to a feeling of the tonic. There is an *accelerando*, and the music moves towards a *forte* statement (in canon on the brass) of the original subject-matter, while the strings soar above it with a quaver pattern first introduced as subsidiary material in the original statement.

Five bars of this lead to a long theme developed from all the important elements so far heard:



This is played by all violins and violas in unison, and when the accompanying counterpoint to it assumes greater importance the theme plays a correspondingly secondary rôle, developing by compressing into semiquaver patterns some of the quaver outlines just heard. This semiquaver figuration then develops into a forceful diminution of the original oboe theme:



until, halfway through bar two of the above quotation, the music suddenly quietsens to admit the statement of the second subject (in the related key of D flat major) by solo clarinet. Even here the original subject-matter is not lost sight of, for the rising fourths in the bass refer to it. (Hints, also, of future movements are contained in the semiquaver pattern in bar three of the above quotation: *cf.* Ex. 15.)

These elements now develop in combination until the music broadens out into a thematic transformation of the original theme, heralding a real return to the opening mood. The oboe again has the subject-matter, but the pitch is much higher and the key is C minor. Filling the inner spaces is a supertonic pedal, its occasional semiquaver pulsing adding a dramatic element. At the end of this section the rising augmented fourth is used as a modulatory device to arrive at A major:



Following it is a serene section that seems new in its material, yet is not so in reality, and it develops quickly to a climax where a forceful and highly dramatic statement of the original oboe theme leads to the *Allegro energico*,



the rhythmic compression of the final two notes of the theme giving the clue to the dotted rhythms that now play so large a part in the music. The whole of this *Allegro* section is in reality the development section, but it is a development of rhythmic implications, as will be seen by the two following examples:

The next example shows a highly rhythmic metamorphosis of the opening bars of the Symphony,

and it is followed by a long "appassionato" theme based on both the first and second subjects. The key of the second subject (D flat) is now predominant, but it is mainly first subject material that is used, particularly at the climax,

where it is in canon, and later, on a tonic pedal, where it is in diminution and imitated by inversion. After an enharmonic change to C sharp minor, duple and triple rhythms are simultaneously used (all three parts using basic first subject material),



and this prepares the way for the dual rhythms used when the second subject proper returns.



The tension gradually mounts until, on a supertonic pedal (C), the harmonic ambiguity of the opening finally settles, by way of the augmented fourth, on to B flat major. The coda consists of five bars of the serene *Adagio* section (heard before the *Allegro*) rounded off by a poignant reference, by the oboe, to its first phrase.

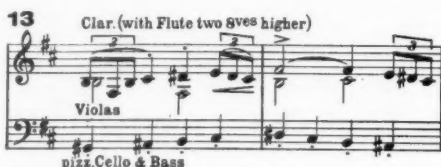


II

The eight-bar theme of the second movement (*Allegro moderato*)



is announced by unaccompanied solo horn. From that moment the theme, or patterns derived from it, are never absent. It is heard in all twelve keys (including one minor), becomes truncated, elongated, augmented and turned upside down. At one point, after a general pause of two beats, it looks as though new subject-matter has appeared,



but closer inspection reveals that the triplet pattern is a rhythmic metamorphosis of the two final bars of the theme, while the slow moving minims of the middle part reveal an augmentation of the theme. The next example



shows the theme in B flat minor moving against an augmented inversion of itself. At the tenth bar the theme, still augmented, reverts to its uninverted shape, while surrounding it are triplets derived from the tail-piece of the theme. This is the climax of the movement, and it is followed by a quiet recapitulation beginning in D flat major, the theme being played by bassoon with derivative counterpoint on the oboe. When by processes of key-change analogous to those used in the first part of the movement the key of D major is reached, the music ends with sketchy references to the theme.

III

The most important thematic elements in the third (*Grave*) movement are those revealed in the first three bars of the cello tune.



In fact, there is nothing anywhere that is not germane to the 2nd-5th-4th progression, although these intervals are not necessarily always in this order.

The opening cello theme is a long 13-bar one. When it has settled on to a serene D major tonality, the violins enter for the first time



accompanied by two clarinets, cellos and basses. Here the basic intervals of fifth and fourth are seen used in the simplest possible way, and embedded in its twelve-bar length is a passing reference to the characteristic augmented fourth of the opening of the Symphony. At its close the tonality is altered by enharmonic means,



and the sort of bridge passage that ensues (based on the opening cello theme) gives way to a secondary theme, accompanied by two strands of counterpoint, one a diminished version of the opening,



and the other a version retaining the original time-values. Moreover, the former has a natural grouping of three-two against the four-two of the secondary theme. A subsidiary climax ensues, and a big *allargando* leads to an Ossianic cor anglais theme, again compounded of the characteristic intervals mentioned above.



Accompanying it is an ostinato for harp and strings, the outline of which is a slower version of the same intervals, a new rhythmic element being introduced by periodic triplets on the kettle drum. From this point there is a gradual

growth in intensity, the triplet drum rhythm appearing with tremendous force at the height of the climax. When this has subsided a return is made to earlier material (see Ex. 16), this time in D flat major, the only difference in texture being the occasional intrusion of the triplet drum rhythm. This latter has great importance, for when the movement has serenely died away on a long held D flat major chord,

IV

the *Allegro vivo* commences with quiet pizzicato strings playing a widened version of the characteristic intervals of the slow movement (with octave instead of fifth), the wood-wind entering immediately afterwards with a theme the basis of which is the triplet rhythm introduced into the slow movement.

20 *Allegro vivo* WW

Clar.
Horns
Bassoon

The close relationship between the two final movements is shown in the following example:

21

The slower melodic element and the interjected triplets are foils for each other and develop side by side rondo-wise. At the fifth bar of the opening of this movement (see Ex. 20) occurs a rhythmic pattern which attains very important accompanimental importance against joyful phrases with which the word "alleluia" is associated in my mind:

22

Trpt.
Troms.

The climax of this section leads to a return of the opening subject-matter, which in turn leads to a new tune, on trumpet and flutes, accompanied by

wood-wind two octaves apart, the characteristic features of which are rising augmented fourths and falling sixths, thus recalling the first movement:



Snatches of the last bar of the scherzo theme (changed to six-eight) are also heard, and out of this general mêlée of subject-matter emerges a trumpet theme in three-four (against a six-eight background) that in itself draws together and unifies the important thematic elements heard in previous movements:



A big allargando leads to a brief return to the opening of the movement, this return being twice broken by a silent bar before the music changes to the solemnity of the initial mood of the whole Symphony:



Full circle is thus made.

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Bartók Festival in Budapest

BY

JOHN S. WEISSMANN

THIS first world-wide musical event in the new Hungary from the 10th till the 31st October was divided into two parts: a competition with four compartments: for pianists, violinists, string-quartet ensembles, and compositions; and a festival of contemporary music. The course of the competition was eagerly followed by the public: Peter Wallfisch (Israel) among the pianists, Sirio Piovesan (Italy) among the violinists, and the Tátrai Quartet won first prizes in their respective categories; the first prize in composition was not awarded and the second was divided between two Hungarians, Pál Járdányi and Béla Tardos. A movement of Járdányi's string Quartet, a composition of remarkable technical finish, had to be repeated at its performance, and the forcefully original ideas of Tardos' Quartet captured the attention of the audience. The Tátrai ensemble's interpretation of Bartók's second string Quartet was the most remarkable performance of the prizewinners' concert.

The festival itself was divided into performances of works by Bartók, by foreign contemporaries, new Hungarian compositions, and performances of works by Hungarian composers living abroad. The three foremost orchestras of Budapest participated: the Philharmonic, the oldest orchestra of Hungary; the flexible and accommodating Radio Orchestra; and the Municipal Orchestra which possesses the best balanced tone of the three. Among conductors mention must be made of Antal Dorati who gave a splendid reading of Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra; of the "local" conductors, two youths, Tamás Blum and András Kóródy, have already an admirable technical dexterity in spite of being in their early twenties; Vilmos Komor as reliable as ever; Tibor Polgár, for years the conductor of the Radio Orchestra, a musician with keen artistic insight; and László Somogyi, the intellectual type, were noteworthy.

The Gala at the Opera House where his three stage-works were performed stood out as the most important among the Bartók performances. Miklós Lukács directed *Bluebeard*, and László Somogyi conducted both the *Wooden Prince* and the *Wonderful Mandarin*. At other Bartók performances Kentner played the third Concerto for Piano, Ede Zathureczky the violin Concerto, and István Antal with Paul Kadosa the orchestral version of the Sonata for two pianos and percussion; Divertimento, Music for Strings and Percussion, first Suite for Orchestra, *Deux Portraits*, *Deux Images* and Cantata Profana were also performed. Unfortunately hardly any of his chamber music figured on the programmes.

At one concert Bartók's great contemporary and friend Zoltán Kodály conducted his own works: his *Psalmus Hungaricus* made a deep impression.

Alban Berg's violin Concerto, admirably played by Endre Gertler, seemed to be the best work and was best performed among the foreign compositions. Tippett's double Concerto was very well received; Stravinsky's *Capriccio* for Piano and Orchestra (soloist Lajos Hernádi), Petrassi's *Don Quijote*, Palester's Suite Symphonique, Hába's Overture *New Earth*, Mihalovici's *Sequences* among the orchestral works, Hindemith's Sonata for clarinet and piano, Milhaud's seventh string Quartet among the chamber-works—all being compositions of individual idiom and accomplished technique—deserve particular mention.

Pieces by contemporary Hungarian composers, in their totality representing one of the most significant trends in European music, manifested an astonishing vitality of inspiration, sureness of technical expression, and multiplicity of style within the common national idiom. Lajtha turns towards France for inspiration, his first Symphony is imbued with Gallic *esprit*; Leo Weiner, fundamentally of a romantic vein, seems also to be attracted towards Latin clarity: the freshness and wit of his Concertino for piano was agreeably accepted. Kentner's splendid interpretation of the piano part was one of the best performances of the festival. Both Lajtha and Weiner command perfect mastery of their craft; likewise Ferenc Farkas who, in his Concertino for piano, proved again that tonality and the common chord are, as means of constructive expression, far from

exhausted. Kadosa's Partita for Orchestra and second string Quartet show a composer of unmistakably individual idiom and a keen sense of style. His Partita exemplifies that music which I would call for want of a better word "twentieth century baroque"; the slow movement of his string Quartet is an eloquent testimonial to his humane sincerity.

Of those composers who are engaged in a quest for formal expression, Ferenc Szabó seems to me to have solved his problems more on traditional lines: in his Concerto for Orchestra the different groups are played out against each other. Endre Szervánszky on the other hand seems to be more revolutionary: in parts of his Suite for Orchestra he endeavours to break with the old principles of form-building; his future development is well worth watching. This Suite has an immediately captivating slow movement. Jemnitz' *Miniatures* for Orchestra show a contrapuntal transparent texture and have lively rhythmic ideas. Sándor Veress' majestic *Psalm of St. Augustine* made a deep impression on the audience: here the dramatic first part is followed by an expressive baritone-solo from which the chorus develop the climax of the work. The lyrical passages embody a typically Veressian nobility of sentiment. János Viski's *Enigma*, a symphonic poem, contains passion, lyricism and sincere emotion effectively expressed. The vigorous ideas and audacious expression of Rudolf Maros' second Symphonietta, and the technical resourcefulness of Tibor Sárasi's Serenade for Strings represented the youngest generation. Pál Járdányi, Hugó Kelen, Rezső Kókai, Lipót Kondor, György Kósa, András Mihály, György Ránki, Rezső Sugár, Endre Székely, István Szelényi were represented by chamber-works.

Of the Hungarian composers living abroad Tibor Harsányi's Divertimento for trumpet and strings and his Divertimento for two violins and strings, Paul Arma's Concerto for flute and strings, Géza Frid's Suite for Orchestra, Mátyás Seiber's *Greek Songs*, and his *Pastorale* and *Burlesque* for flute and strings, Tibor Serly's Sonata Concertante, and his *Elegy* were performed.

The success of the festival was due to Paul Kadosa's tireless work as secretary of the festival committee; while I found the activities of the director of the concerts lamentably inept.

Furtwängler "On Conducting Beethoven"

THIRD PROGRAMME, 29TH NOVEMBER

DR. F. made the following points:—There are people for whom Beethoven has only historical interest. Otherwise it could not have been stated that it was not necessary to bring the Vienna Philharmonic all the way over to London just in order to have Beethoven performed.

The stronger the structure of a work, the more definite is the interpreter's task. Hence there is only one possible interpretation of a Beethoven symphony to which one has to try to approximate.

Superficial exactitude, however, does not mean faithful interpretation. Take the opening sextuplets in the Ninth. Dr. F. once heard them played with the greatest precision, but for this very reason the idea behind the opening fifth—chaos—had vanished. There is indeed far too much paper wisdom in contemporary renderings.

As for tempi in Beethoven, one could write a book on each. Generally it can be said that a conductor can only do what he has first lived through. There are no standardised tempi. The tempo has to vary according to the conditions of performance, e.g. the acoustics of the hall. [This does not contradict Dr. F.'s earlier suggestion that there is only one possible interpretation of a Beethoven symphony. For under different circumstances, one may arrive at the same result by way of different tempi.—H.K.]

The conductor's arch enemy is routine—the line of least resistance. Routine has given rise to many false judgments in history. Nowadays, it is responsible, *inter alia*, for the adoption of excessively quick tempi.

We are always trying to be wiser with our heads than with our hearts. We analyse Beethoven historically, but do not yet understand him sufficiently.

H. K.

Concerts

THE HALLÉ

October-December, 1948

BY

JOHN BOULTON

THE Hallé Society has again provided two series of orchestral concerts in Manchester contriving, in addition, to send the orchestra and its distinguished conductor on regular visits to many other centres of population in the North and Midlands. One of the Manchester series has been given fortnightly, duplicated on succeeding mid-week nights in the all too small and inhospitable Albert Hall and the other, also fortnightly, in the shocking acoustic climate of Belle Vue King's Hall. The Hallé prospectus states that: "At Belle Vue the accent, naturally, is more upon the better known masterpieces." The present notice refers only to the Albert Hall concerts where, in six evenings, we have been offered the second and third symphonies of Brahms, the third and sixth of Beethoven, two Mozart concertos, overtures by Weber, Rossini, Mendelssohn and Tchaikovsky—and the *Sorcerer's Apprentice*. What, might the reader properly enquire, have the audiences at Belle Vue been hearing? The answer is that, by and large, they have been hearing works from the standard repertoire—like the works already mentioned and, before giving our attention to the pleasures of listening at all to the Hallé players, we ask the Hallé Society again:—What is the point of going on with this pretence that there are two kinds of good music? The harm which derives from the underlying implications of this nonsense is incalculable and, with a developing musical public, quite insidious.

During the weeks under review the Hallé Orchestra have played to a consistent level which places them firmly alongside the great orchestras of our time. At their best no other English orchestra can surpass them and few come near them. Under certain conditions which include the recruitment of another dozen to fifteen players, they can attain to world pre-eminence. This is one reason why John Barbirolli has elected to remain in Manchester.

In fairness to the Hallé programme builders due note must be given to such novelties as appeared in the programmes. These have been:—Castelnuovo-Tedesco's Concerto for guitar, Phyllis Tate's for saxophone, the piano Concerto of Jean Françaix and Mozart's oboe Concerto. Add to these *Descobimento do Brasil*—a suite by Villa-Lobos—and Bruckner's sixth Symphony and we have unusual works at the rate of one per concert such as serve to justify, we presume, the explicit characterization of the mid-week series. For the rest, Beethoven, Brahms and the Company on Parnassus provide—and that irrespective of the day of the week.

28th October. Weakness of the flesh caused us to miss the opening concert of 14th October, where the attractions were the Villa-Lobos piece and Kathleen Ferrier singing the *Kindertotenlieder*—a pity, since these songs are all we shall have of Mahler in the North this season, and Miss Ferrier is one of the more distinguished Hallé visitors. At the following concert we heard Castelnuovo-Tedesco's Concerto for guitar and learned, at the feet of Segovia himself, why the guitar family has remained outside the orchestra. The work itself is charming and unpretentious. Segovia's urbane virtuosity was matched by a glorious accompaniment from the Hallé section leaders who, with some twenty strings, made up the chamber orchestra. But a *tutti* is a *tutti* and a guitar only a guitar and, as we clapped the work and its performer, we wistfully hoped that our point might be the better made by the long overdue composition of a concerto for trombone! The *Cenerentola* overture, Debussy's *Printemps* and *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* were all performed beautifully. Such was the fun provided by the overture that we easily excused

Barbirolli for allowing Rossini to fool's mate him; each Rossini *crescendo* got an unscored, but quite irresistible *accelerando*. Our disappointment was in the *Pastoral* Symphony. Whereas in the Debussy Barbirolli radiated finesse and understanding—it showed in his face as in his gestures—in the Beethoven he merely kept the orchestra to their task, and the result was, merely, a task performed.

11th November. The less said about this concert the better. Josef Krips conducted Bruckner's sixth Symphony. The orchestra played as well as they might under this conductor and all we ask of Heaven is that Bruckner forgives them. Dinu Lipatti was to have played Mozart's piano Concerto, K.467. Albert Ferber did so, creditably.

25th November. Mozart's oboe Concerto is almost certainly the intended oboe Concerto of 1777, which was transcribed, in a hastily executed commission for Deschamps, into the second flute Concerto of 1778. Evelyn Rothwell played the solo part with spirit and good taste, if with an occasional breathlessness from which scale-passage work acquired some unexpected diminuendos. She is a fine musician. On the subject of wood-wind, that section of the orchestra stood out particularly at this concert. *The Hebrides* and *Francesca da Rimini* gave well taken opportunities to flutes and clarinets. Brahms' third Symphony and Delius' *Eventyr* made up the programme. The Hallé played this latter work at a recent concert in London, apropos of which we notice that the person who deals with music in a distinguished literary contemporary objects to the shouts which Delius scores into his orchestral ballad. The Hallé produced this bizarrely unself-consciously and with tremendous effect on an audience of warm-blooded music lovers. Which was Delius' idea. And it is too late to object. Delius is dead.

9th December. On this occasion the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra paid their annual neighbourly visit to the Hallé Concerts and played well. If they had nothing to teach their fellows, they certainly delivered a salutary hint to Manchester programme makers with a concert entirely made up by three living composers and a major work of Elgar. A refreshing evening this, with Jean Françaix' piano Concerto as the centre of interest. The composer played, and played well in spite of fumbling with the pages of the score. The music is skilful, gay and free from the influence of Stravinsky. It is recommended to all one-work-per-season concert pianists as a probably easy, and certainly rewarding way of doubling their repertoires. Walton's *Scapino*, Sibelius' *Tapiola* and Elgar's *Falstaff* were given fair performance under Hugo Rignold. Imperfections in the orchestra were minor, but many, and mostly relate to playing discipline.

30th December. More Debussy, more Beethoven and an uncanny *reprise* of the effects produced and noted at a previous concert in this series. The three movements of *Pelléas et Mélisande* were experiences of utter loveliness. From players who really knew the work, Barbirolli conjured images clothed in colours we had not known were there. (What do miniature score readers get from the printed page on occasions like these?) Now nobody, not Debussy himself, would claim that this work stirs the soul of man—any man—more readily than can the *Eroica* Symphony. And yet again the Hallé Beethoven came as an anticlimax. We remembered a Sunday early in the last war, when this same orchestra, as it then was, played the third Symphony, to an audience which could not stop applauding, under a conductor who was to die within a week or two. Was it the nervous sensitiveness of our dangerous days—us and orchestra alike—or did the work mean more to Leslie Heward than we could know? Whatever be the secret of performances like that one, they are memorable as a great work should be memorable when greatly performed. The *Eroica* of 30th December reached into the inner consciousness only to stir this years-old memory.

At this, the last concert of the year, Phyllis Tate's Concerto for alto saxophone and strings received its first public performance. There are four movements and five ideas. The first movement—the one with two ideas—is constructed with extreme cleverness; the second movement has a really good tune, cleverly modulated and of cleverly worked-out dynamics . . . but why go on? The whole work is clever, and gutless and cold. Michael Krein played the exacting solo part with brilliant ease.

FIRST PERFORMANCES*

- I. Jacob, Second Symphony. (LSO, c. Jacob, Central Hall, 17th November.)
- II. Dohnanyi, Second Symphony. (Chelsea Symphony Orchestra, c. Del Mar, Chelsea Town Hall, 23rd November.)
- III. Giesskann, Symphonic Variations. (LSO, c. Goehr, Albert Hall, 20th November.)
- IV. Kalomiris, *La Mort de la Vaillante* (symphonic poem). (New London Orchestra, c. Sherman, Covent Garden, 21st November.)
- V. Mahler, Tenth Symphony: *Adagio*. (BBC Symphony Orchestra, c. Scherchen, Home Service, 21st November.)
- VI. Schönberg, Second Chamber Symphony. (Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Scherchen, Third Programme, 15th November.)
- VII. Regamey, Quintet for cl., bn., vl., vc. and piano. (Blech and others, Polish Embassy, 10th December.)
- VIII. Dallapiccola, Suite: *Marsia*. (BBC Symphony Orchestra, c. Scherchen, Home Service, 21st November.)
- IX. Dallapiccola, *Sarabanda* and *Fanfara e Fuga* for violin and piano. (Grinke and Dallapiccola, LCMC, 7th December.)
- X. Dallapiccola, *Rencesvals*, Three Fragments from the *Chanson de Roland* for baritone and piano. (Fuller and Dallapiccola, LCMC, 7th December.)
- XI. Tippett, *Birthday Suite* for Prince Charles. (BBC Symphony Orchestra, c. Boult, Third Programme, 15th November.)
- XII. Blacher, Partita for string orchestra and percussion. (Boyd Neel Orchestra, c. Neel, Chelsea Town Hall, 22nd November.)
- XIII. Scarlatti-Bryan, Violin Concerto No. 2 (Thomas Matthews, Boyd Neel Orchestra, c. Neel, Chelsea Town Hall, 22nd November.)
- XIV. Benjamin, *Ballade* for strings. (Same concert as XII and XIII.)
- XV. Rawsthorne, Quartet for clarinet and strings. (Thurston and Blechs, LCMC, 9th November.)
- XVI. Berkeley, Concerto for 2 pianos and orchestra. (LSO, c. Sargent, 13th December.)
- XVII. Jeppesen, *Te Deum Danicum* for solo voices, double chorus, organ and orchestra. (Suddaby, Ripley, Lewis, Williams, Madrigal Choir of Danish State Radio, BBC Choral Society and Symphony Orchestra, c. Mogens Wöldike, Albert Hall, 27th October.)
- XVIII. Stravinsky, Mass for mixed chorus and double wood quintet. (Choir and Orchestra of La Scala, Milan, c. Ansermet, Third Programme relay, 27th October.)

Most common characteristic: cyclic form.

Jacob says the mood of his second Symphony may have been affected by the fact that it was written during the last stages of the war. True enough, in the case of both the atom bomb and this work one is overwhelmed with wonder that so little substance can prove so devastating and can make so much noise (Central Hall's acoustics apart). The scherzo is, as in most mediocre symphonies, the least mediocre movement, and there are one or two enjoyable subtleties elsewhere. The original opening of the introduction, for instance (which *Adagio* reveals the first subject of the first movement) leads thrillingly

* Including first (public) performances in England and London.

and unexpectedly into the home key of C. Again, in the latter part of the second movement, the flute's C major version of the principal theme (which is itself unobtrusively related to the first movement's first subject) is a happy climax in the total tonal structure. Owing to the banality of some of the themes and the monotony of their treatment the work will probably enjoy temporary popularity, but coming from a composer whom we respect it depressed us profoundly. Nevertheless, it is far better than Dohnanyi's workmanlike bombast in E which grows worse as it proceeds and is not worth the paper it is damned on. As for the D major Giesskann, my comment is unprintable, and I am left to wonder how this corpse came to be included in a serious concert. The Kalomiris, too, is a disappointment, particularly where it turns A major and vulgar, and retains these characteristics to the end.

To the Viennese tradition. Deep enjoyment of the Mahler was marred by grave doubts as to the validity of several disturbing touches in Křenek's much-praised, allegedly authentic orchestration. The Schönberg, in two movements, made a powerful impression even on me, an uninitiate. Begun on 1st August, 1906, it was finished, I think, some eight years ago. It thus contains elements of the composer's earlier style. Is the quick, first part of the second movement new, and are the first movement and the slow final section of the work of earlier origin? The first movement never loses sight of its strong tonal centre, E flat, though there is a leaning towards the subdominant, and the end-section returns in no uncertain manner to the initial tonality. But far from resulting in inconsistency, the "atonal" part of the second movement emerges as a logical, tensing contrast, to be relieved at the end. It is interesting to note here that the *Ode to Napoleon*, "which employs all the techniques of 'atonality'",¹ also ends tonally, in fact in the same key as the present work. For the rest, this Chamber Symphony corroborates what I have previously suspected, i.e. that whenever Schönberg is foreign to me, this is not his fault, but mine. I recognize the master. I did not recognize anything, however, in the duodecuple *Intermezzo romantico* of the Regamey, except for a common chord, which a distinguished Schönberg performer in the audience did not recognise in his turn. He told me the movement was remarkable; I wish now I had asked him to indicate what was going on in it. Instead, I spoke of the Chamber Symphony, where to he retorted, "Early Schönberg doesn't interest me". From Christ to Freud, the Master has always had amazing disciples. Amazing in various ways, to be sure. Dallapiccola, for instance, who adopted Schönberg's system in 1942, is an astounding genius. The beautiful *Marsia Suite* is largely pre-Schönbergian, the outer movements being orientated from the tonality of E, with the Death of Marsia ending in a clear E minor, while the Dance of Apollo is in C. Of the two studies for violin (1947) *The Times* critic says that the violin is "no longer permitted to be a mellifluous maker of melody" (*The Times*, 8th December), an observation which, in view of the saraband, is incomprehensible to me. The fugue ends unmistakably in C sharp major; indeed the work shows something like Schönberg's "pantonal" approach as exemplified by both his above-mentioned compositions. The same may be said of the stirring *Three Fragments* (1946), which end upon D in G.

Tippett's Suite in D, with inner movements in G minor, F (with A major trio) and B flat, charms throughout. Blacher's own Partita doesn't, but he cleverly reverts to the suite's ancient key scheme, casting all three movements in A (principally minor), though at the very end he turns into A minor's relative major. I say "cleverly" because tonal monotony is completely avoided. Proof: When after the concert I suggested to a leading composer and to a distinguished musicologist that this seemed to be the only contemporary work whose different movements dared proceed in the same tonality, they both said they had not noticed it. Otherwise, and rather ironically, the work is only satisfactory where the percussion is left out of the business, i.e. in the slow movement and in the concluding double ostinato. Bryan's latest Scarlatti arrangement in D is impaired by stylistic and structural incongruities; the attempt at cyclic treatment, for instance, is absurd. Benjamin's F minor *Ballade* belongs to his best work; it appears, in fact, to

¹ Newlin, D., *Bruckner, Mahler, Schoenberg*, New York, 1947, p. 261.

solve the sonata problem more naturally than the first movement of his Symphony. Rawsthorne's terse, lucid, and moving clarinet Quartet in E flat is in its turn a supreme achievement whose form develops without such jerks as the fugal exposition in the second movement of his otherwise convincing two-movement violin Concerto. Another two-movement concerto, Berkeley's for two pianos, seems an even more original work than his piano Concerto, though his attack on the problems inherent in this form would perhaps have been still more interesting if he had refrained from going for aid, in the coda of the second (variation) movement, to the opening theme of the first.

Of the two sacred works, the *Te Deum Danicum* in C needs no recommendation at this time of the day, though Graham Carritt's commendable article in *The Listener* of 21st October should perhaps have contained a remark on the composer's exceptionally organic technique of transition. Observe* how, after the C major fugue *Tu Rex, o Christe gloria*, the drum roll on C evolves under the C sharp minor six-four chord, to lead to the chorus' excited *O salva nos!* And before the bass solo that precedes the final chorus, we get that mysteriously open fifth on C, into which creeps the violins' oscillation between E flat and E natural. This quavering quaver motion starts on E flat, and consequently the succeeding bass solo (*Dignare nos sine peccato custodire*) opens in C minor. But we have not forgotten the E naturals and secretly hope to be liberated by the major mode. And sure enough, the bass's restatement is in C major. I regard this bass solo as the most inspired piece, but such is the composer's craftsmanship that you are not annoyed when inspiration leaves him. Stravinsky's problematic Mass needs a lot of recommendation, but first of all it needs a performance. For you can hardly give this title to the singing of the Choir of the Milan Scala which was scandalously out of tune and distorted in texture. (The latter fault may have been partly due to the broadcast.) In the *Agnus Dei*, whose three invocations are unaccompanied and alternate with the orchestra, the choral rendering became in fact chaotic. To give just one example, the contraltos were unable to find the root in a diminished triad's first inversion, although this note (E) should have been reached in comfortable conjunct motion. The few among us, however, who followed the mess in an advance copy of the score could at least see what we were supposed to be hearing. I was thus able to form the provisional opinion that this long-awaited Mass is a sado-masochistic masterpiece.

NEW ERA CONCERT SOCIETY

PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA UNDER WILLEM VAN OTTERLOO

First London performance of Overture—*De Vogels* (Diepenbrock)

Albert Hall, 11th October

We thank the New Era for introducing us to new works, even if these represent an old era. Written in 1917 and conceived in still earlier terms, this G major overture hides its formal weaknesses quite successfully behind its stressed thematic economy—almost the whole movement derives from the opening tune—and behind sound effects. The programme note related the programme of the overture in considerable detail, but we submit that any musical programme can go and bury itself if the musical structure suffers by it. The present movement consists of a beginning, a muddle, and a recapitulatory end. The (likeable) muddle starts long before what the programme note called the "middle section", i.e. at the point where the opening motif is for the first time inverted and a modulatory section leads from the tonic over, *inter alia*, B minor and C major, to the home key's relative minor. The muddle reaches its height when after a clever *Steigerung* and upon an in itself attractive modulation from G minor to B flat, an in itself attractive hybrid between a bolero and a polonaise makes its formally unmotivated appearance, only to lead, after a few bars, to nowhere. To put it another way, the whole muddle section

* As a matter of newly acquired principle, I am writing this review two months after the performance. The advantages of looking back at a work over a distance outweigh the disadvantage of possible lapses of memory.

consists of unintentional bridge passages linked by intentional ones. Otterloo rendered the last movement of the *Haffner* Symphony with understanding, though he mistook crotchets for quavers, and Giesekeing (Schumann, Brahms B flat) moved his body more often than us.

PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA

Albert Hall

The *Art of Fugue* (c. Scherchen): 12th November

Brahms Violin Concerto (Elizabeth Lockhart, c. Mosco Carner): 6th December

SCHERCHEN paraded his imposing knowledge of the *Kunst der Fuge*, but did not attain a live interpretation. If his heart was in it, it is not big enough. At least one fugue, moreover, namely No. 5 (the first in contrary motion), he took in the wrong spirit, making an almost jolly affair out of it. Schweitzer is doubtless right that here the theme "bekommt etwas bewegt Feierliches". Roger Vuatez's version of the work (for str. qt., fl., ob., cor angl., bn. and str. orch.) is, like Scherchen's own reading, a tautology, amounting in places, unlike Scherchen's approach, to *Kitsch*.

The Brahms Concerto was a memorable event, owing to Dennis Brain's horn playing. Flesch once said that Miss Lockhart's was Britain's greatest violinistic talent. Let her musicality draw level with it.

EXPLORATORY CONCERT SOCIETY

Conway Hall, 15th October

London String Trio (Lidka, Forbes, Joseph)

I HAVE never heard a greater difference in merit between successive movements than that between the second and third movements of Robin Orr's *Serenade* (1948) which received its first London performance. The slow movement, that is to say, is far above, the following *alla marcia* (pizzicato) beneath criticism. Fortunately there is no such contrast between the first and second movements, nor, unfortunately, between the third and fourth. Finzi's Prelude and Fugue (1942), however, presents a similar incongruity. The Prelude rouses its intended expectancy, but the "Fugue" miscarries to the (organ) point of absurdity. We wonder indeed whether there is a serious musician who can sit through this dominant pedal with a serious face. That Mozart's arrangement (1782) of Fugues 13 and 14 from Book II of the 48 (transposed to F major and G minor) miscarries in respect of sound I submit as a more personal impression; my companion at the concert (a pianist) took exactly the opposite view, *i.e.* that the fugues actually sounded better on the strings than on the piano. But in any case Mozart's own prelude to No. 14 is neither here (Mozart) nor there (Bach); that to No. 13, on the other hand, is a beautiful Mozart introduction to Bach. The concert's final fugal *fulgor* was reached in the *finale* of Reger's surpassing D minor trio, where a traceable tinge of Bach¹ makes itself felt. H. K.

HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE

17th October

THE Barylli string Quartet, with members of the wind ensemble of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, performed Beethoven's Septet and Schubert's Octet in a way that gave the lie to Frederick Corder's statement in the first edition of *Grove* that, whenever we hear these two works, we have the impression of an exceedingly feeble orchestra and yearn for the proper fulness of string power, albeit they are not in the least orchestral; for the balance was perfect. A curious distinction appeared in the rendering. The Septet was played with a comparative absence of élan, as if a nervous young composer, anxious to please, was making his first bow, and the trio of the *scherzo* (the most perfect

¹ Cf. *St. John Passion*, No. 13: "Ich folge dir gleichfalls mit freudigen Schritten."

waltz, not so entitled, in Beethoven's works) proceeded at an unexpectedly slow pace. The Octet, on the other hand, came out with an unforgettable romantic fervor, even to a moving *ritardando* in the second part of the *scherzo* and a delivery of the *tremolo* before the start and close of the *finale* that threw the mystery of tragic passion over a triumph of serenity and youthful joy. The variety of tone in the leader's playing is remarkable, the first and last *allegros* of the Septet coming out almost as with different styles of bowing. If one felt occasionally that Schubert was running ahead of Beethoven in a work so carefully based, in externals, on his model, this was due to Leopold Wlach's perfect treatment of the clarinet; indeed to attend to the dialogue of clarinet and bassoon (Karl Oehlberger) was in itself sheer delight. Nor must the restrained sonority of Gottfried Freiberg's horn-playing be forgotten in an appreciation where it is really an injustice to the whole to mention any part.

BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Albert Hall, 10th November

THE two parts of this concert might have been headed "With the tide" and "Against the tide." The fashionable flippancies of the overture to *Semiramide* (1823) had their modern counterpart in Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra (1943). This five-movement work, *concertante* only in part, and full of spasmodic surprises, witty persiflage, and ingenious instrumental combinations, has no point of rest. One feels no spiritual impact in such music, which, except in the *Allegretto Scherzando*, carries very little obvious shape. Brahms' fourth Symphony, which filled the second part, seemed to play *Téméraire* to the steam tug in Turner's picture. The opening ("Behold and see") theme was not given its full Handelian or romantic weight, but this was perhaps to save fuel for the *coda*, which John Barbirolli brought off supremely. The final *passacaglia*, where the lesson of Beethoven's 32 variations in C minor is expounded symphonically (the change to the major coming in the twelfth and thirteenth variation respectively), was magnificently rendered and a special word of praise must be given to the flautist. The two middle movements of this tragic work do not wear so well; their emotional content hardly seems deeper than the respective movements in Tchaikovsky's last symphony, on long acquaintance.

E. H. W. M.

BERLIN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Conductor: Sergiu Celibidache

Albert Hall, 20th November

It was hard to assess this concert from Block L of the stalls: only in Blocks A and F of the arena is it possible to hear clearly what goes on. The Albert Hall is notable for having the worst seats at the highest prices. But it was possible to realize that the Berlin orchestra is a near-perfect instrument: such precision as that at the climax of the *Roman Carnival Overture* (from bar 397 onwards) left one agape; in spite of a rather unnecessary *accelerando* the triplets whirled with fantastic *staccato* from the whole mass of players. In the A major section of the *Andante sostenuto* the brass showed surpassing delicacy matching that of the wood-wind, while even at the most exuberant moments the full roundness of the tone was held in all departments. Ravel's *Rapsodie Espagnol* (which never seems quite to reach its point) showed the flexibility and subtlety of the orchestra, more versatile than its Viennese counterpart. The Berlin Philharmonic can adapt itself convincingly to most styles (recall the superb broadcast of works by Elgar, Strauss, Shostakovitch, Debussy, and Wagner). The Tchaikovsky Fourth went, of course, with a bang and the start of the *Finale* shook even Block L. The conductor did some queer things with the Symphony but they seemed not to matter and to describe the performance would entail a dull eulogy of the whole ensemble, singling out the brass, who retained the full beauty of their tone in a genuine *pianissimo staccato* (*Scherzo*) that some of our lusty ex-bandsmen would do well to remember.

Best of all was the Mozart *Prague* Symphony, where for once the *tempi* were set clearly and then left alone, so that the music (Newbolt's "*courtesy cold of hearts on fire*") made only its own inimitable accents and showed all its beautiful proportions intact. Celibidache was absolutely strict in *tempo* and it was significant, too, that he abated his normal gesticulatory manner in this work and contained himself impressively in a neatly economical but expressive beat. One reporter commented that the Mozart lacked "inner life", but I rather suspect that he meant outer sparkle, the one quality that this solemn and pathetic Symphony eschews. Surely only jaded palates can have found its unforced periods dull? The composer himself insisted that his music should be played in strict time and with sharp divisions between *forte* and *piano*: when this is done, and the orchestra is as alert and concentrated as the BPO the result can hardly fail to bring out the music's essence.

Judging by his performance on this occasion (the only one on which I have actually seen him) and by the life and soundness of his interpretations in the abovementioned broadcast (21st November), Celibidache's eccentricities have been overemphasized; unless, as is possible, he had to resort to more violent methods with a less capable and responsive orchestra. His attitude surprised me out of a preconception, and flamboyant though he was in Tchaikovsky and Ravel (the former particularly is, anyway, as much spectacle as sound), it was evident that he was always an exact amount ahead of the orchestra and that his most terrific flings were part of a well-controlled technique. He did nothing that had no effect on the sound. And unlike most of his colleagues, he seems modest enough to step back within the orchestra for his first bow.

R. S.

BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Albert Hall, 24th November

THE soloist, Paul Tortelier, in Dvořák's cello Concerto, was competent but I missed the rhapsodic passion which makes Casals' performances memorable. Even Beecham was unable to make Delius' *Song of the High Hills* sound convincing. He should edit this work—one of the least satisfactory of Delius' compositions. The long, discursive orchestral introduction could be cut and the thick jungle of choral and orchestral climaxes thinned out: at the moment they are little more than a confusion of rich noises. The Luton Choral Society were suitably ecstatic and Lorely Dyer and René Soames did their best with the rather meagre and completely unvocal solo parts. Sibelius' Seventh went well—indeed it was the best performed work in an uneven programme. Beecham almost succeeded in turning it into a symphony, although I remain vaguely dissatisfied with a work that spends so much time in generating its themes that little is left for development or discussion: a curious reversal of the classical tradition.

The orchestral playing (except, perhaps, in the Sibelius) was mediocre. The strings suffered from their customary lack of vigour which approached, in the Dvořák, something like sheer inertia.

D. M.

Review of Music

Elliott Carter. Piano Sonata (1945-46). (Music Press Inc., N.Y.) \$3.00.

This work, "written during the tenure of a Guggenheim Fellowship", takes about twenty minutes to play and is in two movements, the second offering an *andante* contrasted with an *allegro giusto*. Throughout it is sonorous but not beautiful. The marks of expression are in three languages; notes, printed in diamond notation, are required to be played "silently", and in the last movement there are sometimes as many as four changes of time in so many bars. The effect is a vexing and impatient rhapsodical cacophony.

E. H. W. M.

Opera

COVENT GARDEN: 9 October, <i>Carmen</i> (Conductor—Rankl)			
11	"	<i>Aida</i>	(" Goodall)
18	"	<i>La Bohème</i>	(" Rankl)
11	November,	<i>Siegfried</i>	(" Rankl)
7	December,	<i>La Traviata</i>	(" Goodall)
9	"	<i>Fidelio</i>	(" Rankl)

THE best of these were *La Traviata* and *Aida*; the worst *Fidelio*, with *Carmen* and *Siegfried* as close rivals.

This *Traviata*, with Schwarzkopf, Schock and Silveri, in which a really creditable attempt had been made to present an integrated performance, was the most rewarding evening the company have yet given us. The result had style, which Covent Garden opera habitually lacks; here were three fine artists combining to present Verdi to the best of their individual and collective abilities; a very good best, the excellence of which is easy to explain. It is no good putting an occasional blue in the boat (as *The Times* has it) if the rest of the cast consists of Mugginses male and female more or less continuously catching crabs. If Covent Garden is intent on employing the Muggins family it is heading for irretrievable disaster unless it is prepared to retain only those members of the clan who at first show a vestige of promise and then, not so much later, some sign of fulfilment. There were no Mugginses in this *Traviata*.

In *Aida* our interest was sustained by Welitsch (*Aida*), Silveri (*Amonasro*), Nowakowski (*Pharaoh*) and Michael Benthall's generally intelligent production, and although the remaining principals failed to make the most of their music, the pomp and circumstance of Verdi's most ambitious occasional piece came at times within recognisable distance of realization. But why ruin the *dénouement* by entombing *Aida* and *Radames* in a cardboard superstructure about as solid as a postwar matchbox?

In both these works Reginald Goodall achieved a clarity and precision which may perhaps entitle him to be described as the most improved member of the company.

Of the operas conducted by Karl Rankl *La Bohème* came off the best. But it remained a patchwork and created little or no overall impression for two principal reasons: that Geraint Evans lent no personality to the character of Schaunard, while Welitsch made Musetta altogether too overpowering. The programme told us that this was "the Covent Garden production revised by Peter Brook". Whatever form the revision may have taken, the result left a great deal to be desired; old tatty scenery, inept and sluggishly operated lighting and a miraculously localised snowstorm falling over an area of approximately one square yard, these and other passing reminiscences of parish hall theatricals almost tempt us to describe this production of *Bohème* as an alltime low; but Covent Garden will undoubtedly go further and who are we to prophesy that it may not fare worse? Elisabeth Schwarzkopf played Mimi with the artistry London has come to expect from her and David Franklin sang Colline's farewell to his coat with touching pathos.

According to the programme there was no producer for *Carmen* on 9th October. Certainly it was understandable that no-one wanted to be held responsible for the lighting; and, in fact, singers and orchestra all seemed desperately anxious to dissociate themselves as far as possible from the entire proceedings. Even Silveri seemed bored with Escamillo's histrionics, as we were with everything except Franz Vroons' acting in the final scene. Rankl took a deal of exercise in the pit, as he so often does, but did not appear to command a great deal of attention.

The outstanding feature of *Siegfried* was the magnificent characterization of Mime by

Peter Klein. This was no artisan playing a part for a few hours for a fee, but was rather the personification of Mime and so vivid that we had no doubts of its authenticity. Such artistry is seldom seen on the operatic, or any stage and brought to mind Martinelli's Otello and Margherita Grandi's Lady Macbeth. Svanholm gave an accurate and musicianly account of Siegfried but his voice, lacking colour and flexibility, could do little too lend lustre to Wagner's longwindedness; also he seemed to find his thick-soled shoes a barrier to easy movement and it is difficult to adduce any argument for their necessity. Hotter was himself as Wotan and Astrid Varnay made an adequate if rather nervous Brünnhilde. The rest of the cast were undistinguished, with Grahame Clifford's Alberich an original if disconcerting essay in a new kind of *sprechgesang*. The production was even more disconcerting, with incredibly "Heath Robinson" dragon, inefficient rather than merely primitive forging equipment, and lighting extravagances some at least of which were altogether too bizarre to have been intended. The sets too were garish and frowsty, somewhat after the manner of a seedy Victorian seaside boarding house. For the orchestral playing in Acts I and II no words can be too severe; it was disgusting. If this represents the best that Dr. Rankl can get from the Covent Garden orchestra, assuming proper rehearsal facilities, then either he is wasting time or the orchestra needs drastic overhaul and reconstitution. It is too late now to compile a list of the multitudinous blunders, even if it were thought desirable to do so, but no-one who was present on 11th November will easily forget the sequence of horn disasters which we should have regarded as excessive even for a first-term student of the instrument at one of our colleges of music. Act III brought some improvement but still left many problems of balance unsolved.

Fidelio was notable for Elisabeth Schwarzkopf's Marcellina which was in every way exemplary, and for Sylvia Fisher's very promising performance as Leonora; the stage sets, too, are better than most, — but that, emphatically, is the end of the "credits". As a whole, the best that one can say for this performance is that it emphasized all the difficulties inherent in the work, and that at least should provide a healthy corrective for the know-alls who take a superficial view of Beethoven's masterpiece and dismiss it as a non-operatic failure. For this particular failure we blame not Beethoven, but Karl Rankl and Friedrich Schramm. The orchestra made an excruciating hash of the overture (*Fidelio*) and then settled in to a very coarse, rowdy and utterly unsuitable evening with some excursions in the matter of tempo for which there appeared to be little or no justification: we are not speaking of emotional fluctuations within a piece, like Furtwängler's personal yet evocative direction of Marcellina's aria, but of curious rushes and pauses reminiscent of a short-sighted elderly gentleman making a late bid to catch an important train. Such treatment gave the work an irresponsible air, at times of haste, at others of frivolity; and the irresponsibility lay in the haste and frivolity turning up in the wrong places. Schramm's production did nothing to integrate the rather awkward story: Fisher did not appear to know what to do with herself when the prisoners were on the stage, the prisoners' chorus itself was grossly mishandled compared with the Vienna production at Covent Garden some eighteen months ago, and Florestan, on the point of death from starvation, was allowed to stalk about the stage almost like a ham-Shakespearian delivering a monologue; but the worst crime of all lay in allowing Tom Williams to play Pizarro as a common slut. Need we say more? The lighting scheme was odd and its execution by no means precise.

One last word. At a performance of Prokofiev's *Cinderella* ballet on 30th December we were impressed with the general efficiency of the lighting, the singularly appropriate costumes and the accuracy with which they fitted the dancers, and also the delightful stage sets. In addition the sets and costumes were clean and gave the impression of being properly cared for between performances. These are all points contrasting violently with the majority of the general criticisms we have had to make with monotonous regularity about the Opera. It is time Covent Garden took proper care to mount its opera productions in a worthy manner; the performance of *Cinderella* has shown that there are members of the opera house executive who understand what this means. Let them go to it or give us an explanation why not.

G. N. S.

THE MAGIC FLUTE

Covent Garden, 13th October

THIS was, on the whole, a reverent and beautiful performance, scenic hitches apart, and the choral work was kept at the magical pantomime level, with transformation scene, and never lapsed into grand opera. The orchestra, rough in places (e.g. the three boys' trio, in A), tended to crush the Queen of the Night (Audrey Bowman), who did her best with a part to which she was not quite equal—a terror-striking brilliance in appearance and *coloratura* being necessary here. The weakest points in the rendering were Monostatos' aria, where the accent of frenzied trembling lust was missed, as it never was in the Beecham performances, and the penultimate scene of the abortive attack on the temple, where all sense of mystery and conspiracy was absent. The dressing and décor, conspicuously in the case of Papageno, where Arnold Matters, lent by Sadler's Wells, would have rejoiced Schikaneder—his every gesture rewarded sight—seemed to hark back to the Theater auf der Wieden, and was *delicious* in the instance of Pamina against a parrot-tulip background: only the three boys, presented dimly, recalled *A Midsummer Night's Dream* rather than Vienna. No praise is too great for Shirley Russell's delivery of Pamina's lament or Marian Nowakowski's conception, aided by a rich voice, of Sarastro. Murray Dickie's Tamino was adequate, though the romantic flair and feeling of growth in experience as the part progresses did not come out. Papageno's pleasant voice was supported by a charming Papagena in Barbara Britton. The programme is very confusing; what is printed as Act II, Sc. 7, should be Sc. 8, and vice versa. E. H. W. M.

RIGOLETTO

(1) At Covent Garden, 14th October;

(2) At the Rialto Cinema in an Italian film version, with Tullio Serafin as Director of Music (Press Show: 8th October).

(1) Top E flats do not make a Gilda, not along with bottomless misconduct in the more musical regions of the register. We are in fact mistaken if we think that we need a constant supply of guest singers—in this case Solange Delmas of the Paris Opera, singing in Italian—in order to be taught how to keep out of tune and time; in this respect our operatic tradition is securely established. If nevertheless the performance was a memorable experience, this was due to exceptionally creative interpretations of Maddalena by Edith Coates, and of the whole work by Peter Gellhorn. Here is a young conductor with a mature heart and head for music, and a nose for the theatre.

(2) Against this performance the Italian film would disappoint even if the recording were less miserable. In point of fact it is less miserable than that of the first filmed opera, *The Barber of Seville*.^{1,2} But must the sound track change its pitch, must it be unfaithful in balance, must it in fact offer a whole collection of defects in dubbing? The performance itself has its exciting moments, though Mario Filippeschi as the Duke is at times as profligate in his intonation as in his amorous pursuits, and the others emulate him. Hubert Foss' sparing English sub-titles are the only faultless feature.³ H. K.

LA BOHÈME

Covent Garden, 9th November

THE fact that this opera was first performed in English at Manchester in 1897 not quite a year and three months after the original Turin production is perhaps the best reason for giving it in English now. Throughout, partly owing to the loudness of the orchestra

¹ Keller, H., "The First Filmed Opera: Revolution or Retrogression?", *Sight and Sound* (British Film Institute), Vol. XVI, No. 62.

² Keller, H., "Films and the Opera", in (a) *British Film Review*, April, 1948, and (b) *Film Monthly Review*, May, 1948.

³ For further details about this film, see the present writer's "Another Filmed Opera", *Film Monthly Review*, December, 1948, and his review in *The Monthly Film Bulletin* (British Film Institute), Vol. XV, No. 178.

under Peter Gellhorn, the words, except in *parlante* passages were practically inaudible, but for a hard consonant here and there. Joan Hammond's Mimi is moving, and Audrey Bowman's Musetta a spirited piece of finished acting and vocalisation. Marian Nowakowski brought to the "overcoat" aria something of the majesty with which he invests the part of Pimen. Paolo Silveri and Rudolf Schock made Marcel and Rudolf as credible as such creations can be made. The second act is a charming spectacle, in the disposition of the houses and crowd.

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE

Covent Garden, 15th November

ARTHUR NIKISCH died in 1922, and I had last heard this opera under him with, I think, Marie Brema as Brangäne; after something like thirty-five years it strikes the ear differently. Two wars have passed and one acutely feels the slowness of the musical pulsation. True, the two chief figures are under the influence of a drug through two-thirds of the action, but the cause is deeper than that; it lies in Wagner's peculiar system by which nothing is allowed to steal on your ear unperceived but must be seized and worked to death—for him *summa ars reiterare artem*. The emotional stuff, for instance, of Tristan's utterances in the last act before Isolde's entrance is not dissimilar to Florestan's at the start of the second act in *Fidelio*, i.e. pleasure and agony of retrospect and a vision of the beloved arriving as a redeemer; but whereas Beethoven, with the greatest intensity, compels you to his truth quite quickly, Wagner labours and relabours his to such an extent that the emotion becomes fossilised and Isolde's entrance brings with it nothing new but only very distinguished reworking of earlier matter. It is this, a defect maybe latent in *leitmotiv* as the musico-dramatist conceived it, that dulls one's pleasure even more than the obvious *longueurs* of Mark's oration or Kurwenal's solicitude for his vociferous patient. The repetition at the end of Act II of the beautiful music of the love-duet just after we have heard it is another case. One comes to the conclusion that, apart from the esoteric Buddhism, this matter was composed for an unimaginative materialistic society that could be trusted to discover and grasp no beauty without a cicerone. Contrivance spoils everything. There is too much showman. One *can* have enough of a good thing.

Astrid Varnay is a magnificent Isolde, not only in voice and presence but the rarer attribute of gesture, which, in its economy and perfect finish, can only be compared to the finest French acting. The suggestion of the woman wise in cures, the Medea, was wonderfully conveyed in Act I and her conversation with Brangäne in Act II was visually as gracious as a scene in Racine. Set Svanholm's Tristan is not equal to her. He seemed stiff and his words overpowered his sounds, as hers never did, too declamatory. The suggestion of age and fidelity was well given in Hans Hotter's Kurwenal (how delightful to hear him sing in German!) and, Norman Walker's King Mark invested that part with real pathos. Constance Shacklock's Brangäne deepens as the action proceeds; she does not look quite in the period; perhaps the modiste or coiffeur is to blame. David Tree's Shepherd was more compelling than Edgar Evans' Young Seaman, who had to depend on his voice alone. Karl Rankl conducted as if this were a classical, not a romantic, masterpiece; the clauses in the magnificent prelude came in blocks of sound, and the sonorous weight of the introduction to the third act splendidly bold, that to the second act being a contrast in subdued playing. He never lets the orchestra get in the way of the voices. The décor leaves much to be desired. In Act I the hangings of Isolde's part of the deck are not only funereal but completely obscure any view or suggestion of the sea; that on the spectators' right might at least not be drawn, for, as it is, all feeling of the ship's progress or motion is negated. In Act II the seat and woodland are far from primitive, evoking Verlaine's *Colloque Sentimentale* or, as my neighbour observed, *Les Sylphides*. But the designer is unhappy in his trees; the single one in Act III, with the upward swoop of its left-hand bough, must be quite the most extraordinary botanical specimen ever shown at Covent Garden.

E. I. W. M.

RADIO OPERA FROM GERMANY

THIRD PROGRAMME

NORDWESTDEUTSCHER RUNDfunk

Recordings

Der Schauspieldirektor: 15th October

c. Harry Hermann Spitz

AN inexcusably deficient broadcast (laudable *qua* broadcast) of a bad recording of a none too good performance. The announcer treated the interruption "of about one minute" lightly, but it depends, if we may say so, on the minute, which in this case covered almost the entire *da capo* of the E flat aria, i.e. one of the two arias and one of the four numbers of the opera. Why was the *da capo* not repeated? The BBC need a few more musicians in their daily round. As for the work, neither Einstein nor Dent points to the above-mentioned aria's exceptional and, within the opera, exceptionally profound turn to the dominant (B flat) minor on the way to the dominant major. The latter is the key of the then following trio, upon whose own rise to the dominant we get an unmistakable preview of the Three Ladies' trio (*Allegro* part) in the Introduction of *Die Zauberflöte*, i.e. "Was wollte ich darum nicht geben". The Three Ladies' tune acts, incidentally, as a "subcutaneous connecting link" in *Die Zauberflöte*, and I shall therefore discuss it in greater detail in the course of the present trifurcate investigation into Mozart's self-quotations. The *Schauspieldirektor*'s first (G minor) aria looks a bit forward towards the *Zauberflöte*'s aria in the same key, and for the same voice.

Der Corregidor: 19th October

c. Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt

A bad recording of a work to which I, as an admirer of the real Wolf, had greatly looked forward (all the more in view of Frank Walker's article on the opera in *The Listener* of 14th October), but which proved a bitter disappointment. It is in fact a travesty of Wagner, though admittedly one of the most incessant, and incessantly tautologizing *Leitmotiv* forces you to think not only of *Tristan*, but also of the *finale* of Smetana's E minor Quartet. One would not, of course, object if it were a good *Leitmotiv*. "Ah", we hear the epigone's war cry, "but it doesn't at all depend on the tune, it all depends on the treatment!" As if there were any. Happily, faithfully, and boringly married to C major, the theme eventually celebrates its diamond wedding without showing any sign of having experienced anything in the course of its long and largely superfluous life. There seems to be an interesting self-quotation in Act I, after Frasquita's "Sprecht, ich höre zu", and before the cello solo in E flat → C minor which leads to the Corregidor's "Süsse Zauberin Frasquita!" and the ensuing duet between the two. I mean the recitativic cello transition which, I think, is strongly related to the cello's recitativic bridge in the *Italienische Serenade*. But perhaps this is no news to those who know more about Wolf than I.

Film Music

AND NO FILM MUSIC

IAN WYTE has written what, I believe, is his first feature film score, namely, needless to say, *Bonnie Prince Charlie*. With sincere respect for his expertness on Scottish music and his taste, I have to record that in places the score is a bore. So is Miklos Rozsa's—perhaps the most prominent American film composer's—music to Fritz Lang's *Secret Beyond the Door*, though there is no trace of taste in this incessant drenching of the sound track, with its most primitive application of the *Leitmotiv* principle. The film makes one

dream of America's first great thriller, *Scarface* (1932), wherein there was no background music at all. Fortunately, there has of late been a tendency, chiefly among thrillers, to revert to this scheme. After the background-musicless *Le Corbeau* we now get Britain's *The Small Voice*, where the absence of background music is particularly effective since one climax of the film centres on the playing of a gramophone record, "Song of the Rope". Hollywood's (Alfred Hitchcock's) *Rope* (the first film without time lapses in the action) spoils its own policy of using no background score by employing a lot of unnecessary and unworthy realistic music (piano, radio) instead, ingeniously as this is integrated with non-musical sound and vision.

Even Georges Auric, who on at least one previous occasion (*La Belle et la Bête*, 1946) has supplied too much music, keeps the dialogue in *Another Shore* completely free. At the same time this is quite his worst film score, largely worthless, that is, as music. The chief reason is that most of the time he is trying to be funny, and in music you cannot keep on being nothing but funny, not even if you are as resourceful as Auric. Or as Antony Hopkins, who for the self-same reason fails, after a promising start, in his second film score, *It's Hard to be Good*, as he did in his first, *Vice Versa*, and as he did in *Lady Rohesia*. But then Mr. Hopkins thinks that applied music should not be great music, nor complete in itself.¹ Among the composers who do not altogether share this view is, I think, Bernard Stevens, to whose music for *Once a Jolly Swagman* I have, therefore, for weeks been looking forward. But in the screening I attended at the New Gallery (not the Press Show in this instance), the projectionist over-amplified the sound to such an extent that I had to leave the theatre after 10 minutes. By no means an isolated misdeed, this, and one that plays its part in the present-day corruption of musical sensibilities.

On Vaughan Williams' score for *Scott of the Antarctic* I hope to comment in some detail in the May issue of this journal.

H. K.

¹ Hopkins, A., "The Ballet Music of Arthur Bliss", in *The Ballet Annual* (ed. Arnold L. Haskell) London, 1947.

Book Reviews

Die Beziehungen von Form und Motiv in Beethovens Instrumentalwerken. By Kurt von Fischer. Pp. xxiv + 274. (Editions Heitz: Strasbourg-Zürich.)

Dr. Fischer's title is, if not misleading, not clearly indicative of the real subject of his work; his book is a study of *Entwicklungsmotive* in Beethoven. The useful but not easily translatable term *Entwicklungsmotiv* (literally: "unfolding motive") was first used by Ernst Kurth in his *Grundlagen des linearen Kontrapunkts und Romantische Harmonik* to denote those non-thematic motives which are thrown out in the unfolding course of music as "passages", accompaniment-figures, and so on, and (in the language of Kurthian tension-harmony) directly reflect or symbolize the inner dynamics of the musical impulse. They are something between thematic motives and mere empty, conventional figuration, though they are naturally liable to emerge from or merge into either almost imperceptibly. Since they "arise", as Dr. Fischer says, "in the stress of development", they "tend to be thrown up almost unconsciously out of the nature of the instrument used"; there is something direct and improvisatory in their nature, and the value of improvisations as opportunities for surprising the true nature of a composer's thought has long been recognised. A theme is something consciously personal; an *Entwicklungsmotiv* is generally a commonplace in the handling of which personality may or may not show itself.

Dr. Fischer has with great thoroughness examined every aspect of Beethoven's employment of such motives: their fundamental types, their frequent connection with ornaments, their origins in the technique of specific instruments, their use in "obligato accompaniment" and the *durchbrochener Stil*, their relationship to thematic material in the various periods of Beethoven's work, his use of them in introductions and transitions

and climaxes and cadences, in the various parts of sonata-form, in variation and in fugal writing. Since the book is essentially an ordered collection of observations, its general results cannot be usefully summarized. But some of Dr. Fischer's conclusions, and one or two points of detail, may be picked out to indicate the interest and value of his study. Most important of all is his demonstration of the ever-growing significance of such motives in Beethoven's work. The "passages" of his first period tend to be conventional figuration; in the second period he tends to make the subsidiary material thematic; in the last period the non-thematic passage-work becomes almost more important than the actual themes, it is neither conventional nor thematic but it embodies the real musical sense of, for instance, very much of the last quartets. In the first movement of the *Eroica* themes are developed; in the first movement of the Ninth the music develops away from the themes.

Another specially interesting field of Dr. Fischer's study is Beethoven's treatment of accompanying patterns. Dr. Fischer shows his vitalization, or dynamization, of even conventional patterns and contrasts the static, purely accompanimental left-hand pattern of the opening of Mozart's F major Sonata, K.332, with the dynamic—though on paper very similar—triplet figure of the first movement of Beethoven's Op. 31, No. 2. Even apparently conventional broken-chord passages acquire power and significance in the *finale* of the *Pathétique* Sonata (bars 107 *et seq.*) and many similar instances. A parallel increase of significance can be traced in Beethoven's orchestral fanfares: conventional in the first two symphonies, thematic in the *Eroica*, non-thematic but highly significant in the *coda* of the first movement and again in the slow movement (bars 121-2 and 131-2) of the Ninth. Only in his cadence-formulas does Beethoven tend to remain relatively conventional.

Dr. Fischer makes many incidental observations of considerable interest. For instance, he not only notes Beethoven's love of three repeated notes as an up-beat pattern but points out that this figure usually occurs in C minor, E flat major, C major, F minor or major—all on the flat side of C major and in close relationship. Altogether, the book is a valuable contribution to our knowledge and understanding of Beethoven's music.

G. A.

Man, Mind and Music. By Frank Howes. Pp. 184. (Secker and Warburg.) 1948. 12s. 6d.

Writers attempting to treat deep subjects in "popular" style ought to choose their titles carefully. This one tempts the question "What, in 180 pages?", and is of a type with Crowther's *Pelican Outline of the Universe*. Slick alliteration (which Crowther at least has the grace to avoid) will not do. However, Howes covers much ground, even if rather breathlessly: there are four sections, in which music consorts with anthropology, philosophy, psychology, and sociology. The book shows clearly the reasons for the author's eminence as a musical journalist, for he has developed a rare power of relating, in readable terms, his very extensive general knowledge to his feelings about music. To the layman, such writing must prove exciting and plausible: for the musician everything depends on how far he can agree with Howes' views on music; if he finds these unsound the rest of the matter will naturally become suspect. So often does this seem to me the case that any judgment must needs be as completely subjective as the book itself.

Here music is often made to fit external theories when other equally neat ones would do quite as well. *Fidelio*, for instance, is said to assert an ethical idea in terms of music and drama, Beethoven's belief in that nebulous term Freedom. But it would be (and has been) equally possible to regard the work as springing from Beethoven's frustrated desire for a good wife. The answer to the contradiction is that it is more sensible to cast away such irrelevancies and treat the opera as a drama expressed with such power that it becomes awesome. It seems to me reasonable to relate music dogmatically to externals only if it is directly connected with unequivocal words, and much nonsense has been written about non-illustrative music: the philosophizer is lured into the trap of extracting literal meaning from a phrase in a symphony because of the resemblance of that phrase to another

in a different work, where it was associated with words. Howes exposes himself to this fallacy when he quotes Mahler as being more successful in his songs than in his symphonies, which he (Howes) treats as a mere inflation of the same process of trying to express verbal philosophy in music. It may be true of the first four symphonies, but the fifth, sixth, seventh and ninth repudiate the view sharply: Mahler realized at last that in aiming at the most profound musical expression he must rely on an untranslatable musical speech: in such works attention is directed to the power with which they are created rather than to any poetic or philosophical basis. If in doing this Mahler uses his own habitual turns of phrase and accent, it may remind us of his earlier music, but it should not mislead us into saying that

Mahler employed gigantically inflated forms for the expression of this turbulent amalgam of thought, feeling and aspiration, which are not justified even by the magnitude of the subject-matter. But perhaps the subject-matter too was inflated by his emotionalism, for he expressed more truly what he had to say in his songs. (P. 151.)

The question is, surely, not whether the "inflated" forms are unjustified by the "subject-matter" (which is irrelevant because it cannot be proved to exist on internal evidence), but whether they are justified by the degree of power and accuracy with which they are carried out musically. That is a matter demanding greater musical perception than is shown in this book.

Consider the following:

The purely abstract music may, according to Tovey, make an exercise or a puzzle but not music. Bach's *Art of Fugue* and Hindemith's *Ludus Tonalis* are examples of such abstract music which are exercises but not music, and the proof of it is that it is a matter of complete indifference whether you play any part of it loud or soft, *crescendo* or *diminuendo*, quick or slow (though this would hardly apply to Hindemith's pianistic Preludes)—it is music devoid of expression because there is in it nothing to express. (P. 130.)

Howes does not state whether he thinks Tovey would have agreed with his view of the *Art of Fugue*, nor whether he is rather unscrupulously using Tovey as an element with which to bluff the reader. If he has properly studied Tovey's book on the subject, he will know that it was prompted as much by love for the music *qua* music as by a mere mechanical interest in its ingenuities. Moreover, Howes' "proof" is transparently the result of his simple belief that the outward application of dynamics is fundamentally important to all good music. Does he not understand that Bach's contrapuntal work makes its own natural dynamics, that to impose upon it *crescendi* and *diminuendi* of a later age is impertinent, and that if his condemnation of the *Art of Fugue* is correct, it must include most of Bach's other works (especially the "48"), in which dynamic marks are as rare as they are superfluous? And has he not even troubled to note that *Ludus Tonalis* is liberally supplied with indications of *tempo*, dynamics and expression?

On the following proposition (in the section on Music and Logic) Howes stretches Brahms' third Symphony:—

Now it so happens that F major is a key with a peculiar tendency towards flatness. It is the subdominant of C, but subdominance is a relationship of flatness common to all keys. It is, however, the only key founded on the notes of the diatonic scale of C which has any flatness at all. All the rest are sharp, and F major in its single individuality has to assert the claims of flatness against the fifteen accumulated sharps of the other keys. Another phenomenon of flatness associated with the key of F is the difficulty that choirs find in keeping the pitch when singing unaccompanied in that key. They tend to flatten. All this might be mere superstitious exploitation of pure coincidence were it not that absolute pitch has been shown by the discovery of formants to have a direct effect on tone quality (as in instruments) and tone character (as in vowel sounds). F may very well have a "dominant resonance region" that may give it a predisposition towards flatness. Anyhow, there it is: F is a flat key. (P. 82.)

Brahms' No. 3 is made to demonstrate this and space will not allow of more quotation here. But what of the proposition? In Brahms' day F was somewhat lower in pitch than it is now (and in Mozart's it was somewhere between E and E flat): if this key has a predisposition towards "flatness" there must be a physical reason, for which scientific proof would demand a *constant* absolute F. If Howes had been brought up with a piano on which the white notes played a scale of F, would not the scale of B flat have had, for him, a tendency to flatness? The notion is clearly based on the effect of an artificial

system of notation. No key by itself can have behaviour, but is completely subject to the dictates of any masterly composer: if this author is convinced by his theory he must show in a large number of examples that the flatness of an absolute F has moulded most works that have been written in that key; such a demonstration is impossible. How would his analysis of the Brahms account for the B minor at the opening of the *coda* of the *Finale*? Further, unaccompanied choirs surely tend to flatten in most keys unless very experienced, the tendency being determined mainly by the compass within which they have to sing. If F will flatten more than E, that is probably because G sharp is the uppermost comfortable note of the average soprano: the much-used climactic upper third in F would be an A natural. In these conditions F sharp major, with its six sharps, would have a greater tendency to flatness than F; but perhaps Howes would rather call it G flat major? Would he say that E sharp major has a peculiar tendency towards flatness? The argument flattens itself out.¹

These are but three cases of questionable musical thinking in a book which provides more: since this is a musical journal it is important to tackle that question first. For the rest there is much of interest and value, but a writer who aims as high as his title would suggest should take care that his handling of the special subject commands respect. The book is clearly printed, but production is undistinguished.

Studies in Contemporary Music. By Wilfrid Mellers. Pp. 216. (Dobson.) 1948. 10s. 6d.

Studies around Contemporary Music would be a more accurate title for this collection of articles, taken from various periodicals, for Mr. Mellers, in his anxiety to find "an intelligent approach", often discusses anything but the music itself. Consequently the effect is often to confuse the issue when plain comment on the music would have been more illuminating: it is of little use to make such precious distinctions as that attempted between Roussel's "urbanity" and Fauré's "civilization". What do these vocables mean? It is the same attitude of mind that leads Mr. Mellers to the following remarks about Tovey:—

I do not think it is true to suggest that Tovey made any profoundly original or revolutionary statements about the art which he practised so assiduously. The beliefs he held by should be, but are not, common-places of musical aesthetics; his importance lies in his expressing them with a precision that convinces and an authority that awes.

Originality is not the object of musical criticism, and Tovey was never guilty of the "intelligent approach". If his ability to find the truth about musical thinking distinguished him from most of his fellows, he had in that a measure of original, or primal, insight: his importance lay not in his manner of expression but in his expressing such ideas at all. He arrived at his conclusions by the purest adherence to musical facts, and made little attempt to relate crotchets and quavers to matters with which only fancy can connect them. That is why Tovey is instructive and Mr. Mellers merely stimulating.

But to be stimulating is rare enough. I have begun with adverse comments because to end with the book's virtues will create a truer general impression. This writer has much to say that is penetrating and shows himself to be highly sensitive to subtle shades in musical textures. Some of his chapters whet the appetite: those on Koechlin (he is especially perceptive about French music) and Egon Wellesz, for instance, suggest eloquently that those composers simply must be investigated, and it is there that he proves himself capable of dealing with real musical matters. The book contains notes on Satie, Debussy, Fauré, Roussel, Koechlin, Mahler, Wellesz, Kodály, Holst, Rubbra, Rawsthorne, Bax, Tovey, Hartly and Bridge, and a final article on musical education, in which Mr. Mellers rightly deplores its present-day narrowness and the "manufacture of performers". It has been good to read; sometimes irritating, sometimes exciting, and always interesting. The writer's style is sympathetic and fluid (though occasionally verbose) and the production is first-rate.

¹ It is, in fact, the kind of argument that would, if it could, ascribe to the key of S a peculiar tendency to sharpness.

The Appreciation of Music. By Roy Dickinson Welch. Pp. 196. (Dobson.) 1948. 9s. 6d.

Mr. Welch (who is Professor of Music at Princeton) makes a better showing at this very difficult job than most other writers on the subject. His style, though undistinguished, is nearly always clear and his illustrations apt. But there is one vital element disregarded. Like so many of his colleagues, Mr. Welch is able to give lucid accounts of the thematic organization of selected music, but his treatment of the most important thing, tonality, is completely negligible. No understanding of the music of the last two centuries is possible without this and the value of the book is therefore reduced by four-fifths. It is not certain even that the author himself has a grasp of the facts of tonality, for he adheres to the confused notion that sonata-form is ternary in origin: its tonal structure (and thus its musical structure) is plainly binary, and any exposition of it to the ordinary listener should attack the problem of key long before the merely incidental use the composer makes of his themes is commented upon. The themes (or motives; call them by any tag) are the means, not of providing structure themselves, but of ramming home key-relationships by the simple psychological method of the association of ideas. But, important as the themes are, the keys are fundamental. To state and illustrate these points in a book would be a daunting task: in a series of lectures with sound illustrations there is no difficulty: the average listener can be made to grip his natural sense of tonality in a very short time. Perhaps a proper book on musical appreciation is an impossibility, for those who need help will be unable to cope with the illustrations in music type and those who can follow the technicalities will not need the book. On the other hand, tonality is widely misunderstood even amongst the profession: what is needed, no doubt, is a book, in technical language, aimed at the professional musician and given some more tactful title than *The Appreciation of Music*. It is, by the way, interesting to note that Mr. Welch mentions the canons of Klenge; these are certainly not "pedantic", but deserve far more attention than they are given. Some of them are very beautiful. This volume is pleasantly designed and produced.

R. S.

Masters of the Keyboard, a brief survey of pianoforte music. By Willi Apel. Pp. xii + 323. (Harvard University Press and Cumberlege, Oxford University Press.) 1947. 27s. 6d.

This book is not concerned, as the title would suggest, with famous pianists or organists, nor is it a study of the styles peculiar to the keyboard or of the special influences which the keyboard has brought into musical composition. It is a historical anthology of music for organ, harpsichord and pianoforte from mediaeval to modern times, chosen as illustrations to a course of popular lectures on music in general. The intellectual level of the audience to which they were addressed may be guessed from the fact that the author, when introducing his readers to Schubert, observes that he is frequently confused with Schumann. He also says that Friedemann Bach is mostly known as the hero of several novels; this is no doubt true for Germany, but English readers, either of novels or of music, are not likely ever to have come across them.

At this level Dr. Apel's book will be found extremely helpful by young students and by teachers who have to prepare similar courses. The musical examples are numerous and almost all of them are printed in full; they are also fairly easy to play, and will provide a very serviceable substitute for a well-equipped library. The book will be invaluable to those who have no access to a library and who even if they had would be utterly helpless when confronted with bookstalls full of *Denkmäler* and *Gesamtausgaben*. The examples of organ music taken from Buxtehude and J. S. Bach are sometimes set out as pianoforte duets, but Dr. Apel has not adopted the transcription methods of Busoni.

His choice of examples often seems curious, but can generally be explained by his consistently German background. He follows modern fashions in musicology in his exaltation of the Mediaeval and the Baroque, and regards the latter period as culminating in J. S. Bach, who is allowed a disproportionately large quantity of examples. Are the minor colleges of America unequal to providing even the French and English Suites or the

Well-Tempered Clavier? As a lecturer, Dr. Apel never seems to have made up his mind whether he is talking about composers individually, or about the history of musical form and composition, or about the keyboard instruments. Concertos and the concerto style of playing are never mentioned. Busoni used to say that the Germans had no real sense of pianoforte-playing at all; they were concentrated exclusively on *das Musikalische*. One sees this in Dr. Apel's book. "Mozart's compositions for the pianoforte are mostly sonatas and variations." It would be no great loss to the world if they were all destroyed, so long as we were left the concertos. And we might even bear the loss of all Beethoven's symphonies and concertos as long as we might keep the pianoforte sonatas and the string quartets. We should still possess the essential Mozart and the essential Beethoven; but in saying this we are considering individual personalities and not the history of an instrument. Schumann is severely criticized, but copiously illustrated; Chopin, like Domenico Scarlatti and Couperin, all three keyboard composers *par excellence*, are treated rather as outsiders.

As regards musical material and form Dr. Apel accepts the conventional German view of history. Over the origins of sonata-form he is hazy and non-committal, but would like to consider the sonata as German property. The origins of sonata-form are to be found not in German instrumental music, but in the arias of the Italian operas and chamber-cantatas, and in their recitatives too. What the Germans (and Domenico Scarlatti) set out to do was to provide the provincial amateur with reminiscences of Italian opera; they wrote them in sonata-form because the arias were in sonata-form already. If this is once understood it becomes absurd to try to derive the classical sonata from the suite of Handel and J. S. Bach or from the *Ordres* of Couperin, just as it is impossible to derive the classical symphony from the orchestral suite; indeed it is common knowledge that it was an adaptation of the Italian opera overture. German idealism has always been unwilling to acknowledge these facts, because no German can bear to think that the symphonies of Beethoven (to say nothing of those of Bruckner and Mahler!) were descended from the trivialities of Pergolesi and Galuppi.

Musical history needs re-writing; we have most of us been taught it, as we were taught political history, as a succession of Kings and Popes; later on that was written as the history of peoples and nations. The tendency of historians to-day is to write mainly of the peasantry and proletariat, and the same view can be seen among writers on music; but the real history of music is that of the people who listened to it, enjoyed it, admired it and eventually came to worship it.

Musica Disciplina, a journal of history of music. Volume Two, fascicles 1 and 2, 1948. (Published by the American Institute of Musicology in Rome.) Annual subscription \$6.00. Separate fascicles \$3.00 each.

What was formerly called the *Journal of Renaissance and Baroque Music* has now changed its name and appears under the rather repellent title of *Musica Disciplina*; apparently it has exhausted the Baroque, and has taken a step backward in time, devoting itself now to Mediaeval instead, though still remaining faithful to the Renaissance. It is good to learn from the Editorial that the American Institute of Musicology aims at making itself an international research centre and a clearing-house for information on research. The present "fascicle", as it is somewhat affectedly called, starts with a learned article by Guillaume de Van on a recently discovered manuscript from Aosta containing a large quantity of church music of the early fifteenth century. It seems to have been written for the Imperial Chapel and includes several works of Dufay, as well as music by Dunstable, Benet, Leonel and two hitherto unknown English composers, Martingale (if M. de Van's reading is correct) and Sovesby. M. de Van also contributes a second article on "La Pédagogie musicale à la fin du moyen âge", which is of great interest. Yet more so is F. W. Sternfeld's on "Music in the Schools of the Reformation", which shows that Protestant Germany of the sixteenth century, however undistinguished in the matter of composition, pursued elementary musical education with a thoroughness unparalleled in any other country and thereby undoubtedly laid the foundations of all that was greatest

in the German musical achievement of the succeeding centuries. J. Handschin writes on an unpublished manuscript treatise on music (without a title) which was formerly owned by Gafori and copiously annotated by him in the margins. D. P. Walker, whose valuable studies on musical humanism are already well known to readers of this review, writes on the French composers of *musique mesurée à l'antique* at the beginning of the seventeenth century. M. Bukofzer and F. Ghisi also contribute notes on Italian music of the fifteenth century.

The magazine is beautifully printed on excellent paper and no expense has been spared with regard to musical illustrations and facsimiles; the price may seem excessive to English readers, but it is certainly justified.

Music in the Baroque Era. By Manfred F. Bukofzer. Pp. xvi + 489. (Norton: New York. Dent: London.) 1948. 30s.

The period of musical history between 1600 and 1750 was called by Riemann the *General-Bass-Zeitalter*, the age of thoroughbass, and no more sensible name could have been found for it. Modern German musicologists have decided that this will not do, because the keyboard works of Bach do not require a figured bass. This is not strictly true; if we are to be pedantic, we might point out that the *Capriccio on the Departure of a Beloved Brother* includes a piece of figured bass. But it is mere pedantry to insist that keyboard music in general does not require a figured bass, and it is all the more absurd if it proceeds from a deification of Bach, as if he were like the Pope, who claims to stand on a higher footing than all other crowned heads. Accordingly it has been decided that this period is to be called the baroque era, and America meekly obeys whatever Germany orders.

One of the first things that Dr. Bukofzer does in this book is to point out that terms derived from the visual arts cannot reasonably be applied to music; but he is like Adam in the Garden of Eden and throughout his book he is determined to give everything a name of some kind. Many of his names will be puzzling to English readers, but if they have some familiarity with the music discussed they will soon find out what he means; we know many people and things quite well by sight and direct acquaintance without ever discovering their names. Some of these names have already been adopted in Germany, and they are the more puzzling for being translated into a language which looks superficially like English. A knowledge of German will be useful to the English reader, who is unaccustomed to find false relations called "cross-relations" (*Querstände*) and diminished intervals called "false". The *Harvard Dictionary of Music* is invaluable, indeed indispensable, for the understanding of this book, and it is amusing to note that Harvard every now and then applies American commonsense to German musicological jargon. One of the oddest terms is "quilt canzona", which apparently means an instrumental *canzona* of the early seventeenth century, made up as a series of fugue expositions on different subjects. This suggests "patchwork", and it is true that a century or more ago bed-quilts were covered in patchwork; but quilting has nothing to do with patchwork—it has constantly been applied to many other things besides bedspreads, and in these days quilted bedspreads or eiderdowns are made of one material and not patched. A "quilt canzona" can therefore only suggest one made of two layers of material with wadding between held together by lines of stitching. This is indeed essentially "baroque"; the two layers would be the treble and bass, and the wadding the chordal harmony supplied by the *continuo*—a fugue for violin and violoncello with harpsichord stuffing. The quilting would be the bar-lines.

English writers on musical history, even when they are scholars of profound learning like Dr. Fellowes, are generally concerned first of all to arouse interest and enthusiasm for the works of their particular period. Dr. Bukofzer eschews enthusiasm on principle, though when he comes to Bach he cannot help betraying it as a good German. Otherwise he is strictly analytical, and that is the great merit of this truly remarkable and valuable book. He is concerned only with the technical dissection of style and the relations of musical style to the general history of ideas. He leaves enthusiasm to the reader who is

ready to pursue the intimate study of the works treated; he certainly arouses interest and stimulates understanding. The first chapter is remarkably illuminating as regards the transition from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century. In the sixteenth there was only one style, common to both secular and sacred music. This is not strictly true, for even in that century we can see that church music was always to some extent retrograde, whereas secular music was steadily moving towards the future. But there was certainly a general unity of style as compared to that of the seventeenth century, when a sharp distinction was made between the "modern" style and the *stile antico* considered obligatory for the church. "The old style was not cast aside, but deliberately preserved as a second language; composers were obliged to become bilingual." The so-called Palestrina style was codified by teachers like Fux whose knowledge of Palestrina's music must have been very limited; the strict style was in fact a purely fictitious one. "The more the actual knowledge of Palestrina's music faded away, the more powerful became the legend of the alleged saviour of church music." The difference between "renaissance" and "baroque" is admirably summarized in tabular form towards the end of the chapter.

Secular baroque architecture reached its greatest extravagance not in its palaces but in its stage designs. These, however, seldom achieve the exaggeration to be seen in the churches. The baroque is the fruit of the Counter-Reformation, which was in fact a baroque form of religion, and it was only natural that Palestrina, even at his most rapturous, should be inadequate for its musical expression; the *stile antico* stood not for faith but merely for discipline. The baroque style of church music nowadays condemned as "operatic" was certainly borrowed from the theatre, just as the emotional style of sixteenth-century motets was borrowed from the madrigal, but it was no less devotional in intention than the painting, the religious poetry and the pulpit oratory of its period. It is curious that in these days, when the Catholic baroque is officially excommunicated, the Protestant baroque of Bach should be upheld as the ideal of devotional music.

The English reader will be gratified to find that Dr. Bukofzer has made a serious study of English music from Dowland and the virginalists to Purcell. No foreign historian, as far as I know, has ever treated them hitherto in such minutely analytical detail. He recognises their indebtedness to France and Italy for various technical features, and suggests that the harmonization of many popular melodies was derived from a limited number of standard Italian ground-basses. For this he certainly makes out a good case; yet one may wonder whether those basses were not merely the elementary sequence of common chords used towards the end of the sixteenth century by practically all composers, when they harmonized short and simple tunes. They surely only became "grounds" by the process of repetition due to the composition of variations on the given melody. It is difficult to imagine that *Greensleeves*, as he suggests, was first composed to an already existing bass, although in a later age Italian composers certainly wrote free vocal monodies on grounds. As regards the *In Nomine* Dr. Bukofzer tantalizingly refers us for an explanation of the name to a book which is as yet unpublished. I venture to suggest that this puzzling title was originally no more than a formal religious superscription (*In Nomine Patris, etc.*) to students' exercises in counterpoint, which became accepted as equivalent to "an exercise"; and that if some *In Nomines* eventually developed into works of art, it was by the same process that the finger-exercises of Czerny led to the *Etudes* of Chopin.

The German chorale is naturally treated at great length, and a most instructive page of illustrations is printed showing the different ways in which *Ein feste Burg* was harmonised by five different composers from Schütz to Bach. In discussing the Italian influence on the German composers Dr. Bukofzer makes a curious use of the term *bel canto* not consistent with the *Harvard Dictionary's* definition, which conforms to our habitual usage of it—the style of eighteenth-century *coloratura* and its continuation by Rossini and Donizetti. Dr. Bukofzer enlarges the term to mean the definitely melodious vocal style initiated by Luigi Rossi and Cavalli about 1630–40 as a reaction against the purely literary declamation of the first monodists. Another term which is unusual is "luxuriant counterpoint"; from the way in which Dr. Bukofzer uses it it is evidently a technical term to him and not a mere literary characterization. It is evidently intended to be a translation

of *contrapunctus luxurians*, which seems to mean what in academic counterpoint is called "florid species"; at the same time this hardly fits Dr. Bukofzer's use of it, which seems, if I understand him rightly, to mean the sort of counterpoint (mainly) in semiquavers found in Corelli and his contemporaries. But on page 21 he speaks of "harmonically saturated or 'luxuriant' counterpoint", and this suggests Corellian counterpoint based largely on arpeggios—a rhythmic break-up of harmony rather than a contrasting vocal line.

Dr. Bukofzer, as a scientific anatomist of music—for which attitude towards the art he deserves all respect and praise—wishes every single bone in the skeleton to have its correct name, and he finds himself in the position of a zoologist whose specimens change their shapes as frequently as human beings have changed the fashions of their clothes. Academic musicology is evidently on the way to becoming a truly terrifying study for students in American universities.

The last three chapters of this book, on form, on musical thought and theory and on social conditions, contain a gigantic amount of valuable information packed into a remarkably small space. The bibliography of "baroque" books on music is something that has never been made before in so comprehensive a form and is a most important contribution to scholarship.

In his preface Dr. Bukofzer modestly states that his book has not been written by a specialist of the period. It becomes obvious, in fact, as one reads through it, that it has been written almost entirely on the basis of modern books and articles by various writers, and on modern reprints of baroque music; the author hardly ever refers to an original manuscript, although he has no doubt read many of his "baroque books" in their original editions, since hardly any of them have been reprinted. I draw attention to this not to disparage in any way the value of an immensely learned book, but merely to point out to English readers, especially those attached to universities, how desirable it is that we should follow the example of the Americans and take steps to bring our own musical libraries up to date in the acquisition of all these modern aids to musical research studies. Some of our libraries possess historic treasures which America may well envy, but few of them, apart from the Paul Hirsch collection recently acquired for the British Museum, have been systematically built up for the pursuit of scientific research on modern lines. E. J. D.

LEOPOLD MOZART'S BOOK*

ON 27th January, 1756 the wife of the Vice-Kapellmeister of Salzburg was delivered of a boy destined to be first an infant prodigy and then the immortal genius we know as Mozart; on 27th July, by the dating of his preface, her husband was delivered of as quaintly original a manual, with all its merits, as ever proceeded from a printing-press. In this present year of grace, delayed by shortage of paper and destruction of type-matter and proofs by enemy activity, the original Augsburg publication appears for the first time in an English dress, translated by Editha Knocker and prefaced by an invaluable sketch of the author by Alfred Einstein, a small quarto like the original, with all its plates reproduced, and, most sensibly, burdened with scarcely any other notes than Leopold Mozart's own and his "addition". The result is a very strange work of art, and one that any discerning literary eye should appraise at once as something more than a bibliographical oddity, one of those rare fusions of human personality and technical skill that have a place of their own in the booklover's sanctum.

It is possible to enjoy and even to criticize *The Compleat Angler* with no knowledge of fish or fishing, though it is reserved, no doubt, for the practised angler to enjoy it to the full and as old Izaak intended. The same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of *Versuch einer gründlicher Violinschule*. This is not just the violinist's, but everybody's book. It is just and right that all these years after the Dutch and French translations it should be Englished, and its first English edition may in time become a rarity like the first German one. The Oxford University Press' production is handsome; the portrait-frontispiece is too heavily reproduced, like a woodcut; the copperplate grace lost in the expression of the

* *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing*. By Leopold Mozart, tr. by Editha Knocker, Preface by Dr. Alfred Einstein. Pp. xxxvi + 231. (O.U.P.) 1948. 30s.

face, too much like a provincial *petit-maitre*, too little like the father of Mozart. Otherwise all, on an uncaptious survey, is well. The translation lacks something of the *gemütlich* colloquialism of the original; for instance in the note on page 51 *Notenwürger* (note-stranglers) is rendered "note-murderers" and the inimitable *Fick Fack* (not in my pocket German dictionary) "frippery". But one does not ask the impossible of a translator; something comes through, and that something is not Wolfgang's father but the old Leopold Mozart, like an old brown sherry.

In one particular only do I differ from Professor Einstein. Commenting on Mozart's remark to Padre Martini in 1776 that "his father does not put his heart into his work but devotes himself to literature, which has always been a favourite pursuit of his", he says "In reality Leopold's only preoccupation was his son". One has but to glance at this work, published twenty years before, to see that the son must be right and that literature, booklearning, was a *passion* with the father and the education of his children according to his own eighteenth century Sir Austin Feverel's recipe, actually secondary, though he seems to have written no other book. The manuals for flute and for piano of Quantz (1752) and C. P. E. Bach (1753) were before him. They are very different from his. Though Quantz starts his *Einleitung* with a copperplate vignette entitled "Principium Musicum" showing an old man writing on the right while blacksmiths are hammering on the left, his introductory matter is solely concerned with the making of "*ein guter Musikus*", while C. P. E. Bach goes straight to the root of his matter with the three essentials "*die rechte Finger-setzung, die guten Manieren, und der gute Vortrag*". Not so this Leopold Mozart. He is about to put the whole of his musical knowledge into his treatise on violin-playing; and his reader is about to master each thing in order, and so advance to the great mystery. He is writing a big work, he is going back *gemino ab ovo* "and meanwhile name Mercury as the inventor of stringed instruments", inspired by Marpurg's statement that a guide to the violin is still lacking. So 53 pages on the history of music and the meanings of musical signs and terms precede his instruction book proper. He is not quite a great man; there is an air of provincial consequence and fussation about him. His learning, like Meric Casaubon's, is interspersed with familiar illustrations. He will cite Aristides Quintilianus on strings setting in motion other strings (as did in effect Walton in his life of Donne), yet he will write a sentence like "Yet I believe that if it be true that the Greek music healed diseases, then should our modern music certainly call even the dead from their coffins", and he will compare an iron key opening a lock to the musical clef opening the way to song. In this respect he belongs, for an English literary palate, far more to the homely seventeenth century than to the "enlightened" eighteenth, and herein lies his charm. He would have you know that it is not just a *Kammermusik* but a *gelehrter Herr* that is talking to you. There is something comic about the man, but you take off your hat to him, even while you smile at his consequence. Quantz and C. P. E. Bach just serve up a plain repast, Leopold sauces his, and it is just his individual sauce that leaves a pleasant taste in your mouth when his fare is digested, and that, when you come to think of it, is literature.

Many of his observations are shrewdly farseeing; witness "Every melodious piece has at least one phrase from which one can recognize quite surely what sort of speed the piece demands", his "just as well write 'slowly' as 'Adagio' to a musical piece; but am I then the first to do this?", which looks forward to Beethoven's fit of German nomenclature in Waterloo years, his insistence on a *cantabile* style as "the greatest beauty in music" and his parting footnote "a clever accompanist must also be able to sum up a concert performer", etc. True to the Ciceronian motto underneath his portrait, there is no conspicuous beauty in his work and he is neither an exhibitionist nor a mere workman; it is typical of him that this portrait should serve as Fig. 1. Let violinists estimate the value of his counsels to-day; this notice is concerned with their expression only, and that is their author's self-expression; "Here are the pieces for practice", he writes on page 88. "The more distasteful they are the more I am pleased, for that is what I intended to make them". Hail, Leopold Mozart, in your first English dress, and long may you continue to wear it!

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MASON AND MASTER-MASON*

THIS book is not *only* unsatisfactory because the writer, though experienced, has not *felt* enough. True, he has absorbed and reproduced as much of the writing about Beethoven's quartets as he reasonably could, he has talked to quartet players (his book is dedicated to the leader of the Flonzaley Quartet), he has a wide literary reading (not always apposite) and his aim is "to assist each listener toward as high a measure of creative listening as his individual capacities permit". All the same I cannot believe that anyone to whom Beethoven is a real musical presence could, in a book of 294 pages on the quartets alone, dismiss the scherzo and trio of Op. 127 in the twenty-one lines of which this is something more than a skeleton:

After so supreme a slow movement only a super-scherzo could avoid the effect of anticlimax. Unfortunately this one, with its jerky, meager, chiplike theme in four-note accent groups . . . strikes us as . . . in final result, for all its technical cleverness, dry. In vain does the composer resort to his trick of . . . In vain does his contrapuntal virtuosity. . . . In vain does he interrupt it. . . . It remains trivial. The supreme need of the artist, Emerson suggests in his essay on Success, is "frolic health". In his youth Beethoven had his full share of it. . . . We cannot expect an ill, deaf, lonely man to be exactly jolly. And inventing motives is no substitute for kicking up heels.

Is this the *Harmonicon* of the 1820's speaking from London? No, it is Daniel Gregory Mason from New York, and the year (my masters) is 1947. O God! O New York (to alter Samuel Butler slightly)! Did Beethoven write quartets for 'such hogs'? No, I who read *Beethoven and his Forerunners* at school in 1906, did not hurry through these 294 pages by the same author in order to find this pearl of insensitivity (to give it the kindest name), though when I read on page 4 of this book that in the quartet Haydn was "at his sunniest" and on page 8 "characteristic group of notes, called a 'motive', pronounced as in German, 'moteeve', that the ear hears", I was able to calculate the length of that ear and to feel that a *mentor stultorum* was addressing me and others. He belittles Marliave; it is easy to do that, but he is quite incapable of an aperçu like Marliave's on the rapprochement between a passage in the trio of Op. 135 and the E major section of Chopin's A flat Polonaise. Marliave regards that third movement of Op. 127 as, with those of Op. 59, No. 1, and Op. 125, Beethoven's most advanced work and, with examples, gives over 7½ pages to it and its trio, which Mr. Mason does not mention. Had he just *not liked* the latter you might have thought he would have perhaps mentioned the trio of Haydn's Op. 77, No. 1, and considered how much or how little Beethoven had benefited by it, for he makes great use of Mozart in dealing with Op. 18, No. 5. But no, he explains exegetically the joints of these great works, he will even show how one of the themes in the slow movement of Op. 95 will combine with the fugal theme (a combination of which the composer did not avail himself) and he has studied Mies on the sketch books. But he has probably never asked himself why Beethoven, in his *Il Penseroso* and *L' Allegro* conclusion of Op. 18, No. 6, chose the major for *La Malinconia* as well as for its companion. Were he less contemptuous of "tune detectives" (it was apropos of Mendelssohn, not Beethoven, that Brahms, on whom he has written, made the remark quoted on page 58, where he fails to observe that Beethoven echoed Haydn's slow movement six times in his music) he might have heard the Dead March in *Saul* through those major tones. But he does not seem to have an ear for Handel, whom Beethoven worshipped, else surely he could not speak of that grave dance movement in Op. 130 as "a pleasant game" (19 lines). A glance at the last movement of the overture to *Samson* is to be recommended to those who, like this writer, deceived by the word "tedesca", only see the "German-dance" here. It would never occur to him that the *Grosse Fuge* (like Handel's 62 Variations on a Chaconne) is a *suite* movement, and rounds the whole as a gigue might. And, of course, the homage to Haydn in its present finale, Beethoven's last composition, is lost on him utterly ("the yokel resumes his fiddling"). But what can one expect of a critic who quotes *Prince Otto* apropos of the slow movement of Op. 59, No. 2, or compares the treatment

* *The Quartets of Beethoven*. By Daniel Gregory Mason. Pp. x + 294. (O.U.P.) 1948.
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of the Russian theme in its trio (where the mysticism of Beethoven's third period suddenly breaks into his second) to "a *moujik* doing a goose-step"?

It is, in short, useless to write on Beethoven's quartets or any other remarkable phenomenon in the history of art unless you have *taste*. Mr. Mason has none; so, in spite of his reading on the subject, his lavish acknowledged quotations from the works of others and his evident delight in exegesis, his book in his own words "remains trivial".

E. H. W. M.

The Great Dr. Burney. By Percy A. Scholes. Two vols., illustrated. Pp. xl + 379 and xiv + 438. (Oxford University Press.) 1948. 63s.

Taking "The Great Dr. Burney" as his central figure, Dr. Scholes has painted for us in meticulous detail a delightful and vivid picture of life, intellectual, social and musical, in eighteenth century England.

Burney is much more than a good excuse for such a study. He knew every literary figure of the period worth knowing, and was himself the father of the redoubtable Fanny, one of the most popular woman novelists of the age, and of the formidable "classical scholar, schoolmaster and divine" Charles Burney. He was an intimate member of the Thrale circle, and was probably the only man who ever stood up to Dr. Johnson with complete success in a personal encounter; as Mrs. Thrale remarked in a letter, "I never in my life heard Johnson pronounce the words 'I beg your pardon, Sir' to any human creature but the apparently soft and gentle Dr. Burney". His friends and acquaintances ranged from the Royal Family to Theresa Cornelys the adventuress, from statesmen like Burke and Pitt and scientists such as Herschel to the "Blue Stocking Ladies". Above all he was himself a person of the most extraordinary charm and sympathy: added to all this was the fact that he had done the "grand tour", not in the easy luxury of the nobility of the time, but in all the discomfort of an explorer and pioneer searcher after first-hand material for a great book.

What of Burney as a musician? The impression one gets from reading this book is that he was what we would now call a "musicologist". As a practical musician, whether as composer or performer, he appears to have been little more than a gifted and enthusiastic amateur. His greatness lay in his power of making human contacts, which quality undoubtedly accounted largely for his success and influence as a society teacher of music, and in his capacity for sheer hard work and indefatigable perseverance in ferreting out important information. Even in this he was very much the dilettante, if we may judge from his unmethodical ways of going about his task and lack of analytical and critical insight so endearingly described by Dr. Scholes in the delightful chapter called "The Virtues and Vagaries of a Septuagenarian Encyclopaedist". Yet whatever his faults, he was, as a musicologist, a pioneer and (oh that this could be said for all the tribe in these days!) a real human being. His history must remain one of the most important documents of its time for the musician.

However inefficient Burney may have been as a musicologist, there is no trace of this in Dr. Scholes' work. The book is obviously the fruit of a prodigious amount of really scholarly research. There can be very few sources from which he has failed to extract every ounce of relevant material. With great skill Dr. Scholes allows his documents to tell their own story; he himself keeps in the background, presenting and editing and guiding the story with a sure and sympathetic hand. One of the very few faults which may be found with the work is that he sometimes retires too much into the background: for example, a far more full and critical analysis and assessment of the "History" itself, its relevance to the musical outlook of the time, and its intrinsic value, and perhaps a critical discussion of Burney's own compositions, would have added something to our already great debt to Dr. Scholes.

The book is a sheer delight to read at leisure. Plenty of time is needed to get the full flavour of it, and to escape from this fast moving machine age into the spaciousness of the unhurried world of the eighteenth century. Read in the proper frame of mind, Burney and his family and friends become very real to us; like Johnson, you cannot help loving

the man, and when the long life closes you miss him as though he were an old and dear friend.

A remark attributed to Johnson, quoted in a footnote, may serve to sum up part of our debt to Dr. Scholes. It runs . . . "You are an honest man to have formed so great an accumulation of knowledge" and, may we add, to have passed it on to us in so delightful and valuable a book.

H. K. A.

Schumann. By Joan Chissell. Pp. xii + 275. (Master Musicians: Dent.) 1948. 7s. 6d.

The Schumann literature in England is far smaller than might be expected: previous to the present volume, the most important book, by Fuller Maitland, was written as long ago as 1884, when Schumann's widow was still alive and his music, in this country at any rate, still sounded sufficiently modern to be a source of controversy. Its subsequent fate has been curious; a great deal of it is much loved by both listeners and performers, though regarded with suspicion by critics of anti-Romantic tendencies, a somewhat ironic state of affairs in view of the fact that Schumann himself was a critic with a strong instinctive distrust of the professional performer. In her preface, Miss Chissell notes the danger of drawing too close a parallel between a composer's music and his personal life, but rightly observes that in the case of Schumann the two were more than usually interrelated.

The biographical section is shrewdly yet sympathetically written, and the criticism of the music has clarity and discrimination. While realising that the most lovable qualities of Schumann's music are to be found in his impulsive earlier works, Miss Chissell does not fall into the error of condemning all his later music. Her description of the central movement of the A minor violin Sonata is worth quoting, as it sums up very happily the peculiar charm of Schumann's music: "It is full of 'delight in simple things', but in its simplicity it comes as near to human speech as music ever can". To human speech, it should be added, of the most spontaneous kind: Schumann had little aptitude for either oratory or dialectic; hence the failure of his one opera and of much of his choral work. The choice of musical examples in this book is admirable, and they include a quotation from the first movement of the string Quartet in A major which has always seemed to the present reviewer to contain the very quintessence of Schumannesque Romanticism. The chapter entitled "Approach to the Music" shows clearly the various extra-musical influences on his creative work, and his achievement as a critic is well summarized in the final chapter. Perhaps more might have been said about the influence of his music on later composers, which is considerable, and has extended to far more countries than might be expected of music which is usually considered to be essentially Teutonic in character. But of the book as a whole it can be said that it is certainly one of the clearest and most thoughtful pictures of Schumann, as man and musician, that has appeared in English.

The Life of Brahms. By Florence May. Two vols. Pp. xix + 699. (Wm. Reeves.) 35s.

Published originally in 1905, this still remains the most solid and detailed life of Brahms that has yet appeared in English, and the appearance of the second edition, with a certain amount of additions and corrections by the author, is most welcome. Florence May was pupil of both Clara Schumann and of Brahms himself; she knew enough of that musical circle to be able to convey a vivid impression of it, drawing on her own personal experience; at the same time she was not too intimate a friend to be able to draw a discriminating picture of Brahms. The accounts of her own lessons with him are delightful to read, and the biography coloured by an affection which is, however, entirely free from blind hero-worship. Her approach to the music is intensely personal and in some ways very different from that of more recent musicians. There is a widespread tendency now to regard Brahms' songs and smaller piano works as his most completely individual works and to admire him more as a miniaturist than as a symphonist. Miss May speaks warmly of some of the songs but as a whole they receive less detailed criticism than most of the other works; towards the later piano pieces she is distinctly cool, and expresses doubt as to their ultimate popularity. For her, as for Brahms' friend Billroth, it was not the

thoughtful lyric poet, but the "Heaven-storming Johannes" of the first Symphony, the piano Quintet and the G minor Rhapsody that made the strongest appeal. But even to those who may disagree with certain personal opinions it is of the greatest value to read this intelligent, enthusiastic account of Brahms written by one who was only twelve years his junior. P. F. R.

Brahms. By Peter Latham. Pp. x + 230. (Master Musicians: Dent.) 1948. 7s. 6d.

This book's greatest quality is its readability; so many current books on music are either too trashy to be worth reading or so obscure that little real meaning can be extracted from them. Mr. Latham has avoided both these pitfalls and has written an eminently sensible introduction to Brahms the man and his music. The author is refreshingly prone to express his own opinions and preferences, with the result that while this reviewer was delighted to find himself sharing Mr. Latham's enthusiasm for the Requiem, he was almost persuaded to write a fierce indictment of the sketchy comment with which the *Tragic* overture is cast to the outer darkness. Almost, but not quite; for Mr. Latham, perhaps unintentionally but none the less definitely, has struck a powerful blow towards the eradication of the "objective criticism humbug"—a virtue in the face of which minor criticisms of this kind cease to be worth making.

However, one or two small points may be mentioned for possible incorporation in a later edition. The bibliography omits Julius Harrison's *Brahms and his four Symphonies*, though Mr. Latham is fairly clearly familiar with it, while I can find no reference to Professor Deutsch's list of Brahms' first editions. On p. 61 Ischl is said to be not far from Vienna: of course, "far" is a relative term, but may perhaps be a little misleading when applied to a distance of some 200 miles. The practice adopted on p. 115 of printing Greek words in English italic type is one that must be deplored and seems inexplicable when compared with the footnote on p. 155.

A final word about the "Master Musicians" series as a whole, which, even at to-day's prices, still represents good value: could not some attempt be made to bring the format and presentation into line with more modern practice? The appearance of the volumes remains drab and old-fashioned, while there is nothing to lose and everything to gain by making books attractive to handle.

Benjamin Britten: A Sketch of his Life and Works. By Eric Walter White. Pp. viii + 109. (Boosey & Hawkes.) 1948.

The steady stream of scores of music by Benjamin Britten punctuated by booklets, pamphlets and whatnots about Benjamin Britten have long provided a source of instruction to this reviewer in the gentle art of twentieth century "publicity" interspersed with some occasional amusement at the basic transparency of the whole business. Greater composers have had and are having less fuss made on their behalf; but then only a fool believes that life is fair!

Mr. White has penned a competent, if rather dull chronicle which leaves the impression of much ado about very little; but perhaps that is the impression he wanted to convey.

The Year's Work in Music. Edited by Alan Frank. Pp. 79. (Longmans, Green, for the British Council.) 1948. 2s. 6d.

This is a very English survey of English musical life designed for dissemination abroad by the British Council. As such it is a thoroughly sound piece of work with contributions from Dyneley Hussey, Scott Goddard, Bernard Shore, Philip Hope-Wallace, Frank Howes, Martin Cooper, Alec Robertson and A. Hyatt King. English readers may be tempted to an irreverent comment about "the old gang", but foreigners, presumably, will not notice anything amiss. The illustrations vary in quality from a good likeness of Vaughan Williams to a pair of hideous travesties of Professors Westrup and Abraham looking for all the world like the present-day descendants of Colonel Lysander Stark and Professor Moriarty. But there are other competitors for places in the rogues' gallery with (as here portrayed) Michael Tippett as the most promising outsider.

TWO NEW EDITIONS

A History of Musical Thought. By Donald N. Ferguson. Second edition. Pp. xiv + 647. (Kegan Paul.) 1948. 25s.

The Sensations of Tone. By Hermann Helmholtz. Sixth edition. Pp. xix + 575. (Peter Smith, New York.) 1948.

The second edition of Ferguson's book has been revised and enlarged from the pre-war version; the record list has been scrapped and the volume has been brought more nearly up-to-date. On the whole it may be recommended as a fairly reliable general work for students, but a wary eye should be kept for some curious statements like the description of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* as Delius' only opera.

The sixth edition of Helmholtz' famous work is in fact a reprint of the fifth and particularly welcome in view of the scarcity of earlier copies in good, or indeed any condition.

G. N. S.

Sibelius: a symposium edited by Gerald Abraham. Pp. 188 + 28. (Lindsay Drummond.) 1947. 10s. 6d.

One of the articles mentioned in the bibliography that is to be found near the end of this book is entitled "Sibelius, a modern enigma", and there is still an oddly enigmatic and elusive quality in his music. Even in England, one of the few countries outside its native Finland in which it is appreciated, it produces very varied reactions, and this is especially noticeable in a book like this symposium, in which chapters are contributed by different writers. There is for instance a startling divergence of opinion over the seventh Symphony, though Mr. Ralph W. Wood's very chilly attitude towards it is surely held by a very small minority. But in points of technical analysis there is so often room for disagreement; the form of the first movement of the fifth Symphony is still a bone of contention (the present reviewer would describe it as an exposition followed first by a recapitulation and then by a vast synthesis of development and coda), and we can imagine Sibelius himself reading with detached amusement such foot-notes as (in connection with the Quartet) "the reader will remember that Mr. Goddard attaches more importance to the falling fourth". In the chapter on Sibelius' general style Mr. Cherniavsky goes thoroughly into his use of "thematic germs". He points out that the central movement of the fifth Symphony anticipates not only the second but also the main theme of the Finale. But when writing about the second Symphony he is on less sure ground in stressing the frequent use of the falling fifth, which is surely a finger-print to be found in almost all his larger works.

The two chapters dealing with the orchestral music are very dissimilar in character. Professor Abraham's analyses of the Symphonies are admirably clear, scholarly and detailed, and take a thoroughly balanced view of Sibelius' approach to the symphonic form. Mr. Wood's chapter on the miscellaneous orchestral works is far more provocative and is to some extent marred by diffuseness and exaggerations. It is, however, extremely alive and has the merit of continually driving the reader to look up passages in scores, which is of particular value when so many of the works described are unfamiliar. Miss Astra Desmond, writing about the songs, also has to deal with a mass of very varied material; this is done with knowledge and discrimination, though some more alluring musical examples might have been chosen. The chapters on the piano music, by Mr. Eric Blom, and on the chamber and choral works, by Mr. Scott Goddard, both show the sense of proportion that is particularly necessary when dealing with these curiously uneven portions of Sibelius' output. Mr. Blom rightly stresses the value of the three sonatinas for piano, which are singularly characteristic in their wisp-like, elusive manner. Mr. Ralph Hill's chapter on Sibelius the man is inevitably short and slight, but it is thoroughly readable, and makes a pleasant introduction to the book.

Foundations of Harmony and Composition. By Leslie Orrey. Pp. x + 137. (Pitman.) 1948. 12s. 6d.

Despite Delius' assertion to the contrary, it cannot be said that to the average student of music harmony is simply a matter of instinct. And with the increasing elaboration of modern music during the last twenty years, the study of classical harmony may seem to the ambitious young composer to be solely of academic interest. But however much the language of music may have changed, the problems of composition cannot completely alter, and a knowledge of the ways in which these problems were solved by the greatest composers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries may be of help even to the most adventurous student. In this book counterpoint receives comparatively little attention, but the idiom of the sixteenth century is regarded as too specialised for the average student, and of the style of Bach Mr. Orrey remarks shrewdly that "we may feel confident that he had more than an inkling of how his harmony was going to run before he wrote his counterpoint". There are some unusual features in the planning, unessential notes and the cadential six-four being introduced at a surprisingly early stage. This may well bring variety into the generally plain harmonic fare with which a beginner must inevitably be served.

Mr. Orrey rightly regards harmony, not as an end in itself, but as one of the elements of composition; he stresses the importance of the rhythmic position of each chord, and the pace at which the harmonies move, and his attitude towards consecutives is thoroughly sensible. It is interesting that so many of the examples in the book are taken from Chopin, a composer whose preoccupation with one instrument has sometimes blinded musicians to the fact that he is, as Mr. Orrey says, "a masterly harmonist". But most important of all is the emphasis laid on the construction and analysis of melody, without which no study of harmony can be of any real vitality. Here and there are to be noticed signs of haste; the form of "The Lincolnshire Poacher" is surely A-B-B-A, not A-B-B-C, as is stated on page 4; in the analysis of the opening of Bach's three-part Invention in F, an important B natural is printed as flat, and Schumann's "Nordisches Lied (Gruss an G.)" comes not from the *Kinderszenen* but from the *Album für die Jugend*. The style is pleasantly informal and there is much in the book that should be of value to many students and teachers.

P. F. R.

Electronic Musical Instruments. By S. K. Lewer. Pp. 101. (Electronic Engineering.) 1948. 3s. 6d.

The author gives a lucid account of the underlying principles of the various devices which produce musical sounds by using thermionic valves and their associated circuits. The classifying of these instruments is given quite fully and separate chapters are devoted to the three main classes—electrostatic, electromagnetic and photo-electric tone generators. If the reader has a knowledge of "wireless" theory he will find the descriptions easy to follow. The musician without technical knowledge of circuits will find the book unintelligible.

In an introductory chapter the author is not on quite such sure ground. He quite rightly points out that inferior imitation of existing musical instruments is not likely to be of any interest to the musical profession and that the more promising field is in the creation of entirely new sounds, the orchestration of which must of course start with the composer. He is also correct in assuming that "conservatism is very strong in the musical world" but rather confuses the issue as to why this should be so.

If a composer elects to include in his score an electronic trombone he is faced with the difficulty that the work cannot be performed unless the orchestra possesses an electronic trombone and someone to play it. This difficulty has always been present—and has been gradually overcome, else we should still be entertained with orchestras of the Bach period in music. But we have seen the development of the modern orchestra from Bach through Berlioz to Stravinsky. Music, surely, far from being conservative, is, like the other arts, always revolutionary and only hesitates to take up new ideas and inventions until they have been refined into artistic media of expression.

The chief danger of the technician invading the artistic field is to be found in his rank materialism. He thinks in terms of numbers, quantities and power. Mr. Lewis states that "an orchestral composition is more satisfying than a piano solo. A quartet is more interesting than a solitary violin". This is a truly technological conception of an art. Lay it on thick enough and you have satisfying art. Need one say more?

However, in fairness to Mr. Lewer, he is not pleading for an electronic invasion of the orchestra. He sets out to review what has been done in the matter of producing new instruments and this he does satisfactorily. A comprehensive bibliography and an index are included.

H. A. H.

William Byrd. By Edmund H. Fellowes. 2nd edition. Pp. xii + 271. (Oxford University Press.) 1948. 18s.

Unlike sorrows, it is only as single spies that additions come to our knowledge of the English composers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and their music. In *Westminster Retrospect* Hilda Andrews gave a rich account of that fuller, rounder world when Terry's practical work at Westminster Cathedral was making our old music live a new life. Much work has been done during the last twenty-five years, but not all the fruits of that research have been made available. We need the music itself as well as critical accounts of it, and that, it would seem, is crying for the moon in a world whose economy is on the one hand organised on paper forms, but on the other curtailed by lack of supplies. This new edition of Canon Fellowes' admirable book on William Byrd, first published in 1936, is something of an appetiser. With one exception, the changes made in this volume, which has been reset in type, are small, though one or two are interesting (e.g. modifications as between pages 87 o/e and 84 n/e, and pages 125 o/e and 121 n/e). The exception is the expansion of the chapter on Byrd's keyboard music which begins on p. 199 n/e. Dr. Fellowes tells us that "since the first edition was published, the author has collected and scored the whole of Byrd's keyboard music". But it is disappointing to read that "Mr. Stephen Tuttle's proposal to publish the whole of Byrd's keyboard works has not been found possible to carry out". We thus have Fellowes' critical account of this music, but, unless we seek it out, not the music itself. Nor is the author's collected edition of Byrd, in sixteen volumes of vocal works and one of chamber works for strings, yet printed and issued complete. Let us, however, be grateful for what we have, and hope that conditions will make more available sooner than we fear. Let us especially be grateful to Dr. Fellowes for all the long toil and fine skill he has devoted to the Golden Age. Is it greedy to ask for a series of monographs, of varying length, on all those other composers of the time of whom Fellowes' accounts in his *English Madrigal Composers* are all too brief?

Les Instruments du Quatuor. Par Marc Pincherle. Pp. 128. (Presses Universitaires de France.) 1948.

The book appears as No. 272 of a series of short volumes called *Que sais-je?—Le point des connaissances actuelles*. I confess that I found the cover pages of this book so fascinating that I could hardly tear myself away from them to read the more edifying matter within. The mind ranged from *La mesure de temps* to *La vie au moyen age*, from *Les fruits coloniaux* to *Les origines de la bourgeoisie*. One recalls that Donald Tovey would read, in between detective stories, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*; now that I have found this series I think that I shall seek *connaissances actuelles* with many subjects of which I am woefully ignorant but after reading this catalogue am greatly enamoured.

The great quality of M. Pincherle's book is that it is admirably actual. He presents us with the instruments of the string quartet as accomplished facts, things we can, as we read, look at from many angles. He gives us a full description of them, their history, the technique and use of the violin, the violin virtuosos, and the other stringed instruments; and the string quartet as a whole has its separate chapter. It is to be regretted that the book has no index (nor are we told the price), for M. Pincherle's text is full of names, including those of modern players tabulated under teachers, and so wide is his knowledge

that one would like to be able to use the book, short as it is, for reference. That knowledge, I observe, extends to English books; there are references to Kathleen Schlesinger and Gerald Hayes, though the latter's book on the viols is not, oddly enough, listed in the bibliography, and Lionel Tertis is handsomely acclaimed on p. 104. I did not, however, observe any mention of William Young or Joseph Gibbs. Packed with valuable information as it is (rather too much, perhaps, for its length and purpose), this compendium should be useful to string players; I should like to see an English translation of it, with some adaptation possibly, made available along with the parallel book in the same series on wind instruments by Charles Koechlin. Some expansion might be made for a discussion of the effect on musical style of the violin bow and its bite on the strings, as against the viol bow.

Pathways to Modern Music. By Ian Parrott. Pp. 55. (Arthur Unwin.) 1947. 3s. 6d.

The motto of this book is "that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun". "Modernism", we read in the preface, "is here explained not so much by a study of present-day trends but rather by looking at the older music throughout the last two hundred years". Why this arbitrary starting point should have been chosen is not entirely clear, for it would appear that the music of the sixteenth century has had considerable influence on composers of to-day, and the extended comparisons would have made the book more satisfactory. Good though the idea is and wide though the range of the quotations is (within the set limits) the book is not on the whole successful. The author claims that he has done his job of explanation "in such a way that it can readily be understood by any enthusiast without expert knowledge", and for those without any knowledge at all he prints at the end a very incomplete and very elementary glossary. But anyone who needs to look up "rhythm" and "Romantic period" will be bogged before he picks his way through the first technical chapter—No. 2 on Rhythm. I cannot make out what audience Dr. Parrott is addressing. Is he guiding the converted or the unconverted? At times he is so highly technical as to suggest a text-book for music students, at others so elementary as to raise a faint smile, as when he quotes a phrase from Elgar's first Symphony as an example of "pure chromatic melody". "It hints at atonality" he adds and hastily goes on in brackets "This does not mean that there was any affinity between Elgar and the Schönberg school". Plentiful musical examples punctuate the text, but they are not long enough or explicit enough to be of real value to anyone but a musician. The feeling one gets is that here one has a kind of sketch book for a series of illustrated talks to music students and the keener members of a university. Despite one or two dubious remarks and opinions the matter is sound enough; the manner of presentation is where the book seems to fail. A compressed, rather explosive style, with a touch of petulance here and there, does not help the "deictic" (Dr. Parrott's word) intention of the author.

Musical Handwriting. By Archibald Jacob. With a preface by the late Sir Henry Wood. Second edition (revised). Pp. x + 108. (Oxford University Press.) 1947. 6s. 6d.

The honourable word "writer", meaning penman and not inventor, has been neglected in our time; we know of the calligrapher, the engraver, the stenographer, the compositor, but not the writer. Yet, until someone invents a musical typewriter, and having examined that problem in some detail I am inclined to think it not presently to be solved, every composer of music has to perform this odd task of making dots and lines and other curious marks, with a pen on a piece of paper. That amply describes Mr. Archibald Jacob's intention—he tells us (in his own succinct phrase on the title-page) "how to put music on paper". He is surely the best writer, himself, of music in England (though his brother is a more distinguished composer), and here he distils, limpidly, factually, and entertainingly, the essential oil of his experience, to the effect that no bad band parts ought ever to be made again. The book is, as through his modesty he quotes correspondents as saying, the first book on the subject in any language. There is no other, as far as I know; and I much doubt if it could be better. Most composers keep a Forsyth, a Rimsky, and a Gevaert reasonably handy; let them, first, read this book, and then keep

it in that same stretched-for shelf. I recently had the honour of receiving two books on that interesting subject of how to compose music. Alas, neither of them told me! But this book of Jacob's shows me how to write music—a much more neglected subject, but one that the composer cannot afford to neglect. "One word", he writes, "the writer of music might do well to have written up above his desk in largest letters of brightest gold: forethought". And that goes for the other kinds of writers as well! This second edition, reset (the first was published in 1937), is an improvement on the earlier one, and there is, one feels, little more to be said on the author's subject than what we now have. The additions are excellent, if, in one case, depressing, for Mr. Jacob has had to modify his chapter on materials to suit the market conditions of our millennium of peace. He gives us an excellent practical guide to writing on the blackboard, and the question of copyright is properly touched on. His chamber-music addition is valuable and the passage on page 50 about "pizz." is masterly; there are also other improvements. The prose is of a classical simplicity and always crystal clear in meaning. His gentle handling of the problems (so complicated) of legibility in the chapter on spacing could hardly be better unless he were to write a treatise on the whole subject. And he is entertaining, too; on page 85, under "Orchestral parts", we read "Cues are the lubricants of band parts", and in the index we find entries: S.VV. "Babel, tower of", "Gordian knot", "Stein, Gertrude", and "Fetishists".

Modi Antichi, Musiche Nuove. By Mart. J. Lursen. Pp. xxvi + 31. (De Erven F. Bohn N.V.: Haarlem.) 1947. Fr.4.50.

This esoteric book makes me feel unbreeched. I feel my socks are coming down, too. It is (so we are informed) "a collection of compositions in ten musical genera of the third degree"—whatever that means. The book is issued (except for the music) in Dutch and English; while I found the English easier to read, I felt after reading the translated text that I might have known as much had I struggled with the Dutch. The contents of the pages consist of "prelims.", in both languages, twenty pieces of music, an introduction in Dutch first and then English. I read the book in the normal way of a novel or poem or symphony. As the King of Hearts said (ought he not to have a capital T for "the"?), "Begin at the beginning, and go on till you come to the end: then stop". The music in the twenty pieces I found to be a curious *olla podrida* of the excessively simple, the obscure, the restricted, and the experimental. Certain signs indicated to me that I was not reading it exactly—plus and minus before a note do not give my inner ear the exactitude I like to think one can derive from a score, and some of the instruments directed by the composer (usually with an "or" something else) did not quite "ring the bell" with me (if that acoustical metaphor is not too challenging). I turned to the Introduction (it comes at the end, like the overtures that so often finish orchestral concerts). Here I wallowed in a flummox of delighted idiocy. There are two conditional factors which exercised the composer in his work which could not have been deduced from the mere notes of the printed score: an unspecified competition, and an undefined special organ in Teylers Stichting at Haarlem. I hope that I have now begun to make it clear why these rather undistinguished compositions did not leap to my eye at the first glance; I had no idea, and still have none, how they are meant to sound. The "detailed explanation" I avidly looked forward to, but here again I found myself in mist, groping for a path. I do not really know what a musical genus is, though I can hazard a guess. A "tone lattice" falls outside the little orbit of my world. The difference between a "physical tonic" and a "musical tonic as chosen by the author" is almost as baffling to me as the phrase "guiding tone". Each of these minor pieces is explained, some at some length, with astonishing formulae and mathematical references, not one of which can I understand. If anyone needed, after a fairly long experience of musical practice, a reminder that he knows nothing, I recommend him this book as a course in humility and an incentive to begin again. But no doubt others will revel in it, and probably Haarlem, with its organ (which is presumably not mobile), will hold other competitions and publish other world-shaking pieces of 32-bars' length.

H. J. F.

Reviews of Music

Quartet Movement. Richard Wagner, reconstructed by Gerald Abraham. (Oxford University Press.) Score, 5s.; parts, 4s. a set or 1s. 3d. each.

This engaging essay in conjecture ought, one inwardly feels, to provide any proper writer with a text for many thousands of words; but some there are who feel that to add the few extra drops of controversy to the flooding milliards would be like dropping a tear or two in the ocean, to try to flavour it. The problems of Wagner's undiscovered string quartet were discussed by Mr. Ernest Newman in the *Sunday Times* of 24th September and 1st October, 1944, and in other articles in February, 1946, and from this springboard Professor Gerald Abraham has made his courageous dive. His preface to this score is a model of lucid exposition, and shows us exactly what he has done. Finding himself in difficulties of form, he follows Wagner's own example by "raiding" the third Act of *Siegfried*, by reverting to 4/4 time in the (rewritten) 3/4 music, and by supplying an ingenious 30 bars based on a passage from *Siegfried*. One or two other points are duly noted in the preface. The musical outcome of this "make do and mend" policy is certainly convincing. The movement reads well as a string quartet movement, reads moreover like good Wagner. The only passage that does not quite ring true is one where (Professor Abraham uses himself the words "rather arbitrarily perhaps"), he has "telescoped the major and minor forms", and this is merely a matter of personal opinion. Musically, I support the Professor's reconstruction as unlikely to be superseded by any better or more scholarly conjecture. It would be interesting to compare it with the real score, if it should come to light; but that is unlikely in the extreme.

The Mother of us All. An opera by Gertrude Stein and Virgil Thomson. Piano score. (Music Press Inc., New York.) \$10.00.

Commissioned by the Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University and first produced in 1947 by that University's Columbia Theatre Association, this somewhat surprising work is presented in a handsome and spacious vocal score, printed on paper that would make an English music-publisher's mouth water. It is a deliberate attempt to create in musical idiom an equivalent of the literary qualities of Miss Gertrude Stein's word-patterns. The composer, who was born in Kansas City in 1896 and studied for a time in Paris, has long been associated with Gertrude Stein and has not only set some of her poems to music but produced with her, in 1934, an opera entitled *Four Saints in Three Acts*. Thomson is described by John Tasker Howard (*Our American Music*) as "our musical satirist, our Erik Satie". There is little of satire here though there is a good deal of humour. How far the Steinism comes off musically it is hard to tell from the printed paper, but successful though some of it would seem to be, Thomson seems to me to miss some of the fantasy that marks Miss Stein's rhythmic jingles, and one has the feeling that it is easier to reach sheer banality in music than it is in words. The method of transference from one medium to the other adopted by the composer is that of reducing his idiom to so bare a diatonic simplicity as to out-strip the severest neo-classicism and to make *Peter and the Wolf* seem symphonically complicated. The words are set to a rhythmic, patterned *recitativo* of tinkling little tunes that do not attempt to assert their own melodic personality. It is all oddly like a child's drawing, this music, with some surrealist additions by Miss Stein. Unfortunately, this elaborate and self-conscious simplicity needs so much apparatus to explain it. Whereas a folk-carol can tell its story in a few lines of verse, for this modern simplicity we need the whole machinery of a stage and an orchestra and a large cast and all the rest. At the beginning of the score there is an explanatory preface, a page-full of characters minutely described, three close-set quarto pages of directions for "the action". Stein-cum-Thomson are not self-sufficient; they need Maurice Grosser

to write them a scenario. He defines *The Mother of us All* as "a pageant". "Its theme" (he writes) "is the winning in the United States of political rights for women. Its story is the life and career of Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906). Historical and imaginary characters rub elbows and author and composer have each a part." "The scenery", we are told, "should suggest America in the nineteenth century without too much precision as to decade. The costumes should sharply exemplify regions, decades, and social circumstances. The variety of these against a more generalised historical background should offer a spectacle no more anachronistic than that suggested to the mind by the perusal of a volume of old photographs". Whether all this apparatus produces a justifying result could only be judged from a performance. It is easy enough to open the score at random and find isolated passages that seem just laughable. Guying works of art in an unfamiliar idiom is an old-fashioned but profitless sport. The Stein idiom lends itself particularly to the barbs of the ignorant, and it must be confessed that it is hard to imagine any one reading this music for sheer joy in its beauty. One cannot but be conscious all the time that not being an esoteric, one is probably missing the finer points of virtue in the score, and this makes one sensible that there is something ritualistic about the whole business—that if in Wagner a clarinet plays a wrong note it would not ruin the opera, but that here a kind of perverted higher seriousness compels a terrifying accuracy of detail in production. The odd thing is that as one goes on reading the printed pages, one is aware of great purposefulness, some growing tension, and not a little power underneath the superficialities. No doubt, realised on the stage with all its trappings, *The Mother of us All* might be curiously impressive. It is not likely, owing partly to its subject, to be seen here, so one can only guess. I am not sure that in the end the pageant-master with his visual aids would not prove to be the most important person in the production.

William Busch. *Quartet for piano and strings*. (Oxford University Press.) Piano score 10s. 6d., string parts, each 3s.

William Busch was beginning to make a name as a composer of individuality when his life was brought to an end in 1945, under tragic circumstances, at the age of 44. He was a follower and pupil of Bernard van Dieren, who I know thought highly of his talents. The works by which he is chiefly known are the piano Concerto and a sheaf of delicate and personal songs, and also this piano Quartet which is dedicated to and was first played by the London Belgian Piano Quartet. A man of charm and of a retiring disposition, Busch had not, it is certain, grown to the full exercise of his powers as a composer. His music, as might be expected of his association with van Dieren, is unassertive, thoughtful, and rather remote; he sought a distant ideal of beauty, and often attained it. There is a certain wistfulness about the works, some indefinable air, and this the piano Quartet bears throughout its 27 minutes. Despite the marking "allegro con brio", despite its percussive moments, there is a certain delicate sadness about the first movement. The idiom is spare and not harmonic. What is so good here is that the work is a real piano quartet, the music being thought into the medium. There is a certain homogeneity of mood all through the four movements, owing to similarities in the material of each and also Busch's method of writing. It is perhaps in the finale, a set of variations on a not very characteristic theme, that the influence of van Dieren is most clearly to be seen. One is grateful to have this memorial to a personality that was beginning at his death to become a new reality in English music.

H. J. F.

Gerald Finzi. *Music for Love's Labour's Lost*. (Boosey & Hawkes.) 4s. 6d.

Songs of Hiems and Ver are graceful rather than striking, and there is no attempt (unless a pianissimo ascending scale stands for the wind) at representation beyond the cuckoo and the owl (the latter's "Tu-who" a falsetto jump from A-G sharp). Moth's "riddle song" is an effective Andante, and for "Concolinel" a lyric cited in Sir John Hawkins' *History of Music* is set to an engaging 6/8 lilt.

Phyllis Tate. *Two Songs*. (O.U.P.) 3s. 6d.

The sophistication, in simplicity, of the settings of the fifteenth century "The Falcon" and the fourteenth century "The Cock" is, to these ears, painful. The second is clever enough and both rely, as is surely right, more on the voice than the accompaniment. But the *manner* is that of the Cimabue Browns.

N. Rakov. *Five Preludes*. (Anglo-Soviet Music Press, Ltd.) 3s.

There is considerable beauty in these pieces, though their harmonies are restless; their quality is a Field-like melancholy, except in the fourth, where a mazurka rhythm is introduced into a joyous caprice. This is the hardest of the set, which affords a rewarding exercise in legato-playing for an intelligent student.

Darius Milhaud. *Élégie*. (Boosey & Hawkes.) 3s. 9d.

This is a gracious song without words for cello and piano in 6/8 time with bars here and there in 3/8 and 9/8, solidly built but of a Debussyesque languor. Marked "modéré" it requires consummate legato from both instruments to give due effect to its intermezzo-like style.

A MUSICAL PALINDROME

MR. RONALD BINGE's toccata for pianoforte solo (*Vice Versa*, Ascherberg, 3s.) is a novelty. Its 137 bars are written in such a way that when the piece is turned upside down and played backwards, bass read as treble and treble as bass, the result is exactly the same, note for note, a palindrome, in fact. It is, moreover, a sparkling crystalline thing, without pedal, and the 15 bars of *andante espressivo assai* that separate the repeated *allegro* sections of 61 bars are of an order of beauty comparable, e.g., to Reger's E minor Sonatina. That is to say, this is real pianoforte music and rewarding to play. I do not know of a classical precedent for such a musical riddle, not a "musical joke" exactly, which might have amused Mozart and would certainly have delighted Clementi. Mr. Binge is worth watching.

FORGOTTEN PIANO SONATAS

THE University of North Carolina Press offers, with 36 pages of useful critical and biographical preface, a text of thirteen piano sonatas, which Mr. W. S. Newman has edited as illustrations to his forthcoming *History of the Sonata Idea*, the composers being Barrière, Piatti, Alberti, Benda, Agrell, Neefe, Nebra, Dittersdorf, Wölfl, Hoffmann, Reichardt, Loewe and Moscheles. All these are novelties, though almost all are of merely academic interest. The example, preceded by introduction and fugue, in C minor by Wölfl stands head and shoulders above the rest, even if it draws attention to the tremendous influence (from which Beethoven was not exempt) of Mozart's *Phantasie* (K. 475) on the musical thought of its time. The example by Blasco de Nebra is printed from the only known copy in the Library of Congress, and shows, as these earlier sonatas all do, the influence of Scarlatti. That by Neefe, Beethoven's master, ingenuous as it is, foreshadows even later works than the *Pathétique* in its employment of a drumming bass. It is a pity that that intriguing figure E. T. A. Hoffmann, whom Pfitzner has signaled as a rare instance of a genius practising three arts with success, is not represented by a better work than his first sonata; the one in F would have been a better choice, as its opening is highly original. The only "romantic" work in the collection is Moscheles' *Sonate Mélancolique* in F sharp minor, which, if owing perhaps its key to Hummel and certainly its 12/8 time to the first movement of the *Appassionata*, is a single movement work with much of the charm of Field's A flat Quintet for piano and strings, and is probably not without influence on the outset, at least, of Schumann's Op. 11. Perhaps this is not being fair to the example by Loewe that precedes it, which is full of the pedestrian naïveté that appears so often in his vocal Ballads; romantic in intention, may be, it is just dull and Schumann was kinder to it than this age can be. The rest of the collection has few surprises.

E. H. W. M.

Brahms. Quintet in F minor for strings (conjectural reconstruction of the destroyed manuscript by Sebastian H. Brown, made from the Pianoforte Quintet, Op. 34, and the Sonata for 2 pianos, Op. 34b.) (Stainer and Bell.)

Mr. Brown's work is remarkably convincing; not having heard his string quintet version played and having been able to study it only from a set of parts (no score) I must perforce reserve any committing judgment. But it is astonishing how much of the texture is cleared by this reconstruction, and I would be ready to believe that in performance it would reveal far more vital detail than do either of the extant and authentic forms of the work: I hope there will be frequent opportunity of checking this observation. On paper the advantages do not seem to lie entirely with the case for a string quintet, however, and it is difficult to contemplate sacrificing the piano in many instances. In the piano part Brahms has an infinitely greater chance of treating the bass in a free and muscular way than is possible on the cello, which cannot descend below the low C. What is magnificently rhythmic on the piano:—



becomes, when reduced to these terms on the string instrument, merely insipid:—



Another striking instance of the same phenomenon is shown by the following examples:

(a) pianoforte (left hand)



(b) two 'cellos



Here the pianoforte, in my opinion, has it: its clear ringing power is vastly preferable to the shuffling effect in the transcription. There can be no doubt, either, that Brahms makes wonderful use of the contrast between piano and strings, and many of his strokes in this connexion enhance the vividness of the structure in a way impossible in a string quintet. The opening of the *coda* of the first movement (*Poco sostenuto*), for example, though clearly the purest kind of string writing, gains marvellously in freshness when it is a piece of comparatively isolated string texture in the work for strings and piano, thus emphasizing the start of the *coda* in a very pointed way; in his symphonies Brahms provides many similar cases of what might be called "architectural orchestration". And the return of the piano with its disturbing urge to violent action is incomparably more incisive than the strings could be, simply by virtue of its utter contrast in tone colour. It may be that the real reason for Joachim's and his colleagues' failure to grasp the work in its string form was that its immensely expansive and fundamentally leisurely processes did not make themselves clear without some much more vivid tonal contrasts to drive home their points. Possibly this work eventually became a piano quintet for the same reasons that what was originally intended to be a symphony became the D minor piano Concerto;

in both cases the expansiveness of the thought demanded constant contrast and relief for the ear. It could be replied to this that the string Quintet has already made a good effect in actual performance: but that is not necessarily an honest answer, for Brahms' style (and, indeed, the actual music) are now familiar, there have since been things of far greater difficulty for the listener, and there is no longer any need to fear a lack of comprehension. The case is therefore different in practice, though not basically so aesthetically. Subject to my possible correction by the hearing of an actual performance, I would venture to assert that the piano Quintet would appear more close-knit than the string Quintet, that the greater variety of its tone colourings would give it greater flexibility and power. Though there are many passages where the strings alone score over the mixed combination, it remains possible to find as many and perhaps more points where the reverse is true. That Brahms' disappointment in the original version when he heard it played was so great as to make him destroy it may not have been due to a bad performance. He must have heard many of his works ruined in first performances: fortunately he refrained from such drastic action in most other cases. We may therefore presume that he had good reason for altering the present score. This is not to deny Mr. Brown's illuminating piece of scholarship; on the contrary he has clearly made a profound study of the scoring of this work and great respect is due to him for the painstaking care with which he has accomplished the task. I do not, unfortunately, know the version for two pianos; it would be a good thing to hear all three versions within a short space of time. Here is an obvious job for the B.B.C. Third Programme, or, even better, for the recording companies, who could give us the chance to ruminate (in terms of actual sounds) on the matter. Why are they not scrambling to record them all? (The question is purely rhetorical.)

Roger Fiske. Two Duets for voices: *Spring* (Shakespeare); *Sweet Echo* (Milton). (Oxford University Press.) 2s. 6d. and 3s.

Two decorous pieces, singable and fluid. Of the two the Milton setting is the more accomplished; Mr. Fiske's handling of the Shakespeare text is a little too cosy for such robust humour. One could (and should not) imagine it sung in the drawing room. *Sweet Echo* has a liquid accompaniment and flows well. Some of the harmonies (notably at the climax of *Spring*) do not sound comfortable in their rather prim surroundings.

Phyllis Tate. Two songs for medium voice: *Epitaph* (Sir Walter Raleigh); *The Quiet Mind* (Sir Edward Dyer). (Oxford University Press.) 3s. each.

Miss Tate evidently has more talent for song writing than for larger work; these songs reach a higher standard than she achieved in her rather nervy and aimless saxophone concerto. *Epitaph* is an effective song with a good climax and a cumulative, repetitive accompaniment, in which most of the interest resides. For her portrayal of the quiet mind Miss Tate has chosen to make extensive use of the tritone; she presumably considers that this interval, being the even division of the octave, is a symbol of moderation. A less restful sound could hardly be conceived. But perhaps other ears will be persuaded by the brain.

Rudolph Holzmann. *Pequeña Suite*, for pianoforte. (Instituto Interamericano de Musicología-Uruguay.)

Holzmann is a German, aged 38, who has settled in Peru. He studied composition with Vladimir Vogel and Karol Rathaus. This slight suite, which presumably does not show his powers extended, is based on Peruvian folk songs. As far as it goes it is charming enough, though it would not bear much repetition; some of the material could have been treated more piquantly than it is here.

R. S.

Heinrich von Herzogenberg. Ed. Henry G. Ley. *Pastorale* for Organ, on the Choral "Now Thank We All Our God". 3s.

Francis Jackson. *Impromptu* for Organ. 3s.

Handel. Arr. S. Drummond Wolff. *Bourrée* from Organ Concerto in B flat. 3s. (Oxford University Press.)

Pastorale is the middle movement of an organ phantasy by Heinrich von Herzogenberg, Op. 46. This composer who flourished in the second half of the last century, an accomplished craftsman and a teacher of high academic standing, produced an impressive amount of compositions, characterized, as would befit an admirer of Brahms, by a penchant to restrained romanticism. The publication of the present work is particularly welcome for it shows Herzogenberg's advantageous points: his perfect technique, his poetic feeling, and his strong sense of form, though the latter quality seems to be less justified here in view of the somewhat protracted interludes between the middle entries of the chorale. Mr. Ley's edition emphasises felicitously the suppleness of the contrapuntal lines: there are some details about which divergence of opinion may exist (*viz.* the registration of the chorale-melody), but the unearthing of this almost forgotten composer merits unreserved praise.

Jackson's *Impromptu* contains pretty ideas effectively written for the organ, giving ample opportunity to the player to demonstrate the scope of his instrument and his technique. His contrapuntal writing is of the fluent academic type, but one feels a modicum of forcedness in his harmony.

S. Drummond Wolff's arrangement of the *Bourrée* from Handel's organ Concerto (VI Concerti per l'Organo, Op. 7, No. 1) is, on the whole, pleasingly done. The indicated registration, though leaving ample field for contrasts, is never obtrusive. Congregations will appreciate its performance.

Ernst Bacon. Seven Canons, for Two to Four Voices and Piano.

Elliott Carter. *Musicians Wrestle Everywhere*, Madrigal for Five Mixed Voices *a cappella* or with Strings.

Ned Roren. Four Madrigals for Mixed Chorus *a cappella*.

Contemporary Choral Series; General Editor: Hugh Ross. (Music Press Inc., New York.)

It is pleasant to reflect, in connexion with these compositions, on the new lease of life which the renaissance culture of Europe has taken in the land of up-to-date technics and civilization,—at least in the sphere of music. In their search for a technique to express their individual utterance and at the same time to appeal to multitudes, groups, communities, musical "laymen", with works comparatively easy to perform, the younger composers were led—perhaps inevitably—to explore the technique of vocal polyphony which reached its apogee in those times; and in their task they were greatly helped by the remarkable advance of American musical scholarship.

Ernst Bacon turned to that exacting principle, indeed the only immanent procedure in the history of music, the canon. His seven specimens show a diversity of type, number of parts, and texts: in this last respect they range from a passage from the *Talmud* to our contemporary "Author Escaped". No less diverse is, to my mind, their artistic value and style. I found particularly enjoyable the light-limbed No. 3, the exquisitely accompanied No. 4 and the jazzy spice of No. 7.

Elliott Carter's madrigal is set to a poem by Emily Dickinson, and is based on the style of the Elizabethan madrigal-composers. The subtle metric shifts and elastic phrases which distinguish the compositions of the Golden Age are exploited here with much skill. The piece comes to conclusion with a particularly telling chordal section.

Ned Roren's four madrigals on texts by Sappho were inspired by the more sensuous Italian madrigalists. It seems that the harmonic possibilities attracted Roren more than the contrapuntal aspect of the form; yet his harmonies tend to be too rich, too cloying

in effect, and one often feels aimlessness in their progressions. Perhaps it would have been wiser to choose the early masters and the *frottola* as models, instead of attempting the esoteric style of late composers such as Gesualdo. On the whole, No. 2 and No. 3 are the most satisfactory of the set.

David Branson. *Prelude* for Piano; 3s. *Runic Tale* for Piano; 2s. (Augener.)

That the innovations of Liszt and the tendencies of Ravel still maintain their *élan vital* in the contemporary approach to pianistic writing is well illustrated in Branson's *Prelude*. Its harmonic basis is chromatic, exploiting the appeal of the secondary seventh- and ninth-chords and the iridescence of their unexpected side-slipping. The airy, brilliant and excellently suitable pianistic figurations disclose a happy invention; save perhaps for the Dorian middle section of its rondo-form which would perhaps have gained by a less pedestrian left-hand figure. The composer's taste and imagination reveal themselves in his negotiation of the dangerous spots, *i.e.* at the "joints" of the sections, and the concluding coda. This is a recommended work.

On the whole I am less favourably impressed by his *Runic Tale*. Here, at a slow tempo and in close position, chromatic harmonies seem to produce a certain stickiness of texture. The work might advantageously be transcribed for orchestra, the colours of which would enliven those parts so unsuitable to the monochrome of the piano. Yet, in some of the details, the balanced design of the piece demonstrates careful workmanship.

J. S. W.

Oeuvres Complètes pour Orgue de F. Mendelssohn. Revués, annotées et doigtées par Marcel Dupré. (United Music Publishers.) 15s.

A new edition of the immortal organ works of Mendelssohn by the great French virtuoso Marcel Dupré cannot fail to be of considerable interest to lovers of organ music. His well established reputation as a composer and performer, particularly as an extempore player, ensures a sympathetic consideration for his work as editor. The mention of his powers in the realm of improvisation is not irrelevant, as it was by his extemporizations that Mendelssohn earned the admiration of English organists, the outcome being an English commission for the composer to write a series of *Voluntaries* in the style of his impromptu performances.

Mendelssohn requested that the title of "*Sonatas*" be given to his six pieces, as he did not know precisely what the term *Voluntary*—a truly English appellation—really signified.

Thus was the volume of

Six Grand Sonatas, Op. 65,
for the Organ.

Composed and Dedicated to
Dr. F. Schlemmer
by

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.

Published by
Coventry & Hollier.

Offered to Subscribers at the cost of £1 1s. od.

It is interesting to observe that when first advertized the work was announced as "Mendelssohn's School of Organ Playing" but this title was withdrawn before publication.

A comparison of the present issue with the original brings out some points of contrast, although, speaking generally, Dupré is content to show a conservative attitude towards his task. He has, however, removed all the slurs from the music, many of which were useless, if not actually misleading from the point of view of phrasing. This is not to say that phrasing is not suggested in the present edition, but its indication is by the use of staccato dots, both in regard to rhythmic details and to the showing forth of the end of phrases. His method is explained in a useful Preface, wherein he discusses the signs

appertaining to interpretation; the varying degrees of staccato; fingering; registration, and the abbreviations made use of in the analysis of the compositions. As well as the above, Mendelssohn's own Foreword is given in German, French and English.

It is usually assumed that as he was writing primarily for English organists, the composer was careful to keep in mind the inadequacy both of the English pedal organ, and of the Englishman's pedal technique, the result being that the Sonatas are so set out that a fair performance of them can be given by the hands alone, save for the long holding notes, for which the pedals could be easily requisitioned and put to use by even quite modest performers. This consideration did not apply, of course, to some of the subscribers, for amongst them we find the names of W. T. Best, E. F. Chipp, George Cooper, E. J. Hopkins and many other fine players; but that he had to keep in mind the weaker brethren, removes from Mendelssohn the charge that he was casual in his method when he put so much into the right hand part that the left hand might be free to play the notes which were really intended to be played by the feet. Indeed, it has been suggested that the original manuscript was for two staves only, as might well have been the case; but the fact remains that the first edition was one of three staves.

To avoid the confusion caused by the crowding of the upper stave, an edition was issued by W. T. Best which was intended to show such notes as might conveniently be played by the left hand on the stave usually assigned to it. There was nothing iconoclastic in this, but Best did not escape criticism. In this matter Dupré takes a middle course, so that whilst dealing with the more complicated passages in a way which makes the unravelling of the part-writing easier, by bringing down to the lower stave some of the notes, he does not go so far as did Best originally, and some other arrangers since his day have done.

A most valuable feature of this edition is the suggested fingering and pedalling. The French master brings his great experience to bear upon these important topics, so that players of long standing and students alike will gain by a careful study of his method.

In the matter of phrasing we think that something more might have been done, particularly as regards the shaping of fugal subjects. The recurrences of these, however, are clearly indicated by a special mark being placed at the beginning of each. As many of the shorter movements are largely used as Church voluntaries, it is agreeable to note that these are printed in such a way as to obviate the necessity for turning pages; but occasionally in the longer movements it would be necessary to memorize a few bars if an assistant was not available.

The suggested registration is good; but here, too, more could have been done.

The English organist, in particular, will wish to consult other editions as well as this one, in order to gain a full and comprehensive grasp of the possibilities open to him in these truly noble works. No single edition is, or can be all-sufficing. The most interesting series of lectures given by the late Dr. C. W. Pearce, and brought together in a book entitled "On Mendelssohn's Organ Sonatas" can be studied with great profit.

The Three Preludes and Fugues, Op. 37, show the same scholarly editorial work: it only remains to add that the print is clear; the staves not too wide apart, and the format is of the kind which enables the book to open out horizontally, an advantage when the music desk is placed unduly high up above manuals, couplers and pistons, as is often the case nowadays.

A. C. T.

Gramophone Records

FOUR SOPRANO SCENAS

*Mozart: Die Entführung—"Märtern aller Arten."**

Erna Berger and Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Krips.

His Master's Voice DB 6616. 6s.

*Verdi: Macbeth—Sleep-walking Scene and "La luce langue".**

Margherita Grandi (with Vera Terry and Ernest Frank) and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Beecham.

His Master's Voice DB 6739-40. 12s.

*Verdi: Otello—Act IV, Scene 1 and 2.**

Gabriella Gatti (with Nancy Evans) and London Symphony Orchestra, c. Bellezza and Erede.

His Master's Voice DB 6712-3. 12s.

*Tchaikovsky: Eugene Onegin—Tatiana's Letter Scene.**

Ljuba Welitsch and Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Süsskind.

Columbia LX 1108-9. 12s.

Four of the greatest and most elaborate soprano *scenas* in opera are here splendidly realized for the gramophone, each with the best available singer and careful orchestral support, each without cuts or abbreviations, and all but one in the original language. This last is a point of some consequence; however powerful the arguments for translated opera on the stage, there is almost nothing to be said in favour of listening at home to isolated scenes and arias in any language other than the original. What is wanted, of course, is a leaflet (such as the Telefunken company used to supply) containing text and translation; the English companies, who regularly provide unnecessary printed descriptions of abstract instrumental music, have always unaccountably refused to give us the words of a song or an aria.

Constanze's great *scena* is, in effect, a concerto for heroic coloratura, a type of voice which has had no true representative since Lilli Lehmann (it is unfortunate that students have no chance of hearing what she made of this music). The choice now lies between a singer with a strong, but untidy, voice (like Maria Nemeth or Maria Cebotari) or a soubrette with brilliant technique. Erna Berger belongs, as the "innocent" timbre of her voice shows, to the latter category—she is a Blondchen rather than a Constanze; but so sure and accurate is her vocalization, and so complete her command of the Mozartian style, that a better choice could hardly have been made. Josef Krips and the Philharmonia are perfectly in the picture, but someone ought to have told the label-writer that the title does *not* mean "Martyrs of all sorts"!

It was a misfortune that the incomparable pre-war Glyndebourne *Macbeth* was not recorded complete, with Margherita Grandi as Lady Macbeth; here at least (and at last) is the Sleep-walking Scene, in which her performance deserves to become legendary. The noble and thrilling voice is a shade more unwieldy than of old, though its very unwieldiness is somehow turned to dramatic account; the intensity of the declamation, the variety of vocal inflexion, the sense of pathos and horror—all these qualities remain as astonishing as ever. Beecham gets full value out of Verdi's extraordinary accompaniment, with its "hand-rubbing" figuration and its wailing minor seconds on the cor anglais; but his handling of the long instrumental prelude is less striking than Fritz Busch's: the F minor theme on the strings lacks the proper Verdian warmth, and it is surely wrong to play the five repeated dotted notes on the high violins (four demi-semi-quavers followed by a quaver) with the same duration-value for each. A small flaw in a generally superb issue is that the *sotto voce* exclamations of the Doctor and Waiting Gentlewoman ("Oh

* Strongly recommended.

terror!"; etc.) are sung or recorded (or both) at far too high a level, so that these interjections, instead of adding a sense of mysterious depth and perspective to the scene, sound curiously flat and prosaic. There has been much talk about the singer who was "imported" to take the high D flat in the final phrase; but the real scandal—the omission of the last note which completes Verdi's drooping curve—seems to have escaped attention. In the fine aria from Act II Mme. Grandi's recorded tone lacks something of the excitement which this scene invariably generated in the theatre. Before it is too late, may we now have her opening scene, beginning with the reading of Macbeth's letter?

Of Desdemona's infinitely touching music from the last act of *Otello* there have been many famous recordings from the time of Melba onwards, but they were invariably abbreviated; even the complete H.M.V. set of the opera omitted a brief passage from the Willow Song. For its completeness and its fine orchestral playing and recording, the new H.M.V. version deserves a welcome, quite apart from the distinguished performance of Gabriella Gatti. Her warm voice is not under such perfect control that she can do just what she likes with it; for example, her final A flat at the end of the *Ave Maria* is not effortlessly floated, and elsewhere there is an occasional lack of steadiness. But the quality is lovely, the enunciation expressive, and the sensibility of a kind rare among contemporary Italian sopranos. Nancy Evans, whose work is generally admirable, remains curiously out of the picture as Emilia. As the high *divisi* strings pronounce their benediction at the end of the last side, it is almost a relief, for once, not to hear the terrible note of the double-basses at Othello's entry.

The Letter Scene from *Eugene Onegin* is the high-water-mark of Tchaikovsky's operatic writing; indeed its elaborate sequence of melody, recitative and arioso, and the extraordinary suppleness with which the music winds itself into the heroine's changing emotions make the whole scene a model of operatic composition. A previous Columbia recording failed to begin at the beginning, and was marred by some wretched orchestral playing; the present one is exemplary in these respects, and gloriously sung by Mme. Welitsch, in many ways the most interesting of our post-war operatic visitors. Her previous records (from *Aida* and *Der Freischütz*), though full of beauties, were marred by hurried tempi; but on this occasion all has gone well. Since the singer is a Bulgarian to whom the Russian language comes as easily as German, there was no reason why she should not have been allowed to use Pushkin's original text; but we are almost persuaded to acquiesce in the German translation by the exquisite clarity and expressiveness of Mme. Welitsch's enunciation. In this respect she reminds the listener of Lotte Lehmann; the vocal timbre, however, is quite different, not warm and voluptuous, but cold and clear as a mountain stream; strongly individual, yet well suited to the youthful inexperience of Tatiana. This is a record which ought to be played to our young singers to teach them the meaning of the word *legato*, and the expressiveness which can be attained without the smallest deviation from the vocal line. The orchestral playing, under Walter Süsskind, is excellent; the horns outstandingly good. The recording of all these discs is fine apart from a slight tendency for loud notes at the very end of a side to become edgy. D. S.-T.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE SPECIAL LIST

DURING the autumn there appeared a new edition of the Special List, giving details of some 350 records obtainable by dealers on special order only. In the limited space at our disposal it is impossible to give more than a few words of general guidance, but we strongly recommend gramophone enthusiasts to obtain copies of this list and study it at leisure.

The 40-odd samples we have tried have convinced us that while, on the whole, a high standard of performance may be taken for granted, some circumspection should be exercised in estimating the probable age of any given recording before placing an order,—not that this presents any insuperable difficulty to anyone reasonably familiar with the His Master's Voice system of numbering.

A few of the outstanding items may be mentioned: a complete version of *Cavalleria Rusticana* with Gigli, Bечи and Simionato, conducted by the composer which, judging

by the two excerpts we have heard, is one of the finest opera recordings ever made. A fair recording of an admirable performance of the Bartók violin Concerto. A precise and well-recorded version of Mozart's Divertimento in B flat (K.270) for two oboes, two horns and two bassoons, and a number of old favourites from the pre-war catalogue.

The Special List costs 3d. and can be obtained from any His Master's Voice dealer.

Beethoven: Overture, Leonora III.

Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Kletzki.

Columbia LX 1069-70. 12s.

Turin Symphony Orchestra, c. Erede.

Decca K 1849-50. 9s. 6d.

This overture must be played with great accuracy and scorching dramatic intensity, while for the gramophone it must also have recording to match. None of these three requirements are fulfilled in either of these sets. The Columbia is given rather clearer and more forward recording and Kletzki's wood-wind chording on side 1 is the less inaccurate. But neither performance gives any impression of having been fully integrated and each conductor seems to be plodding woodenly along to the *coda* of which each hopes to make something. Both do, but less than they might. Boxy, "opaque" recording (of timpani in particular) does nothing to help in either case. Sides 1 and 3 of the Columbia samples have noisy surfaces, while the Decca version is not entirely free from background hum.

Brahms: Liebeslieder Walzer, Op. 52 and Waltzes, Op. 39, Nos. 2, 6, 15.*

Irmgard Seefried; Elisabeth Höngen; Hugo Meyer-Welfing; Hans Hotter. Pfs.,

Friedrich Wührer and Hermann von Nordberg.

Columbia LX 1114-17. 24s.

Occasionally there comes to hand a set of records, such as this, which by its sheer perfection turns the most sceptical reviewer into a convincing imitation of a rabid publicity agent. Considered as a whole, this is the finest achievement for the gramophone that we have yet heard. Following the sequence of *The Planets*, the Decca *Petrouchka* and the recent Brahms Requiem, these *Liebeslieder Walzer* provide evidence of an even greater advance in fidelity of gramophone technique. The balance and accuracy of *ensemble* are exemplary, while the recording itself is so smooth and unobtrusive as to provide virtually no obstruction between artists and listener. It would be most gratifying if such a standard could be maintained consistently, but four singers and two pianos present less of a dynamic problem to the recording engineer than does a full symphony orchestra. Even so this issue forms a landmark in gramophonic achievement, one on which we offer our sincere congratulations to all concerned.

Bizet: Jeux d'Enfants, and

Chabrier: Habanera.

National Symphony Orchestra, c. Désormière.

Decca K 1845-46. 9s. 6d.

A good example of alert and lively playing, very well recorded.

*Ravel: Shéhérazade.**

Suzanne Danco with L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, c. Ansermet.

Decca K 1966-67. 9s. 6d.

This is a very remarkable achievement. Ansermet proves himself the ideal interpreter of Ravel's finely wrought music, Suzanne Danco sings with accuracy and sympathetic understanding and the Decca Company have most fortunately given us an example of their recording technique at its very best. One of the outstanding issues of 1948.

* Strongly recommended.

HERBERT VON KARAJAN

*Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 in D minor.**

With Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Elisabeth Höngen, Julius Patzak, Hans Hotter and the Choral Society of the Friends of Music, Vienna.

Columbia LX (Auto) 8612-20. 54s.

Mozart: Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K. 546.

Columbia LX 1076. 6s.

Schumann: Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 54.

Dinu Lipatti and the Philharmonia Orchestra.

Columbia LX 1110-13. 24s.

*Johann Strauss: The Blue Danube Waltz.**

Columbia LX 1118. 6s.

*Richard Strauss: Metamorphosen.**

Columbia LX 1082-84 and LXS 1085. 21s.

All the above conducted by Herbert von Karajan, and all except the Schumann played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

Herbert von Karajan has given one public concert in England, while a concert he gave in Switzerland was recorded and re-transmitted on the Third programme of the BBC. Yet, on the strength of this evidence, plus a statement to the effect that Karajan is given to conducting with closed eyes, critics have begun to refer to him as "much publicized". When will music critics learn to get their facts right? These records will do far more to establish a just reputation for the man than any amount of ill-considered tittle-tattle.

The only failure in the group, the Schumann, is by no means lacking in interest. The interpretation is much what we might have expected from Toscanini and Horowitz and comes as near to the spirit of Schumann as Horowitz' incredible B flat Concerto did to the spirit of Brahms. There is much to be said for an attempt to counteract the usual sloppy approach to the Schumann Concerto, but listen to the latter half of side 2; can you believe that Schumann would not have been horrified? This particular kind of barnstorming would fit the Busoni Concerto like a glove, but between the Schumann and the Busoni there is a great gulf fixed.

The Choral Symphony, *Metamorphosen* and *The Blue Danube* are all magnificently done, a slight unsteadiness in Hotter's voice being the only subject for criticism in the three issues. The Mozart is a little stolid.

As regards recording: the Beethoven and the Johann Strauss can be reproduced with greater clarity and definition than the rest. All five sets, unfortunately, suffer considerable deterioration towards the disc centres, the Schumann being particularly unsatisfactory in this respect. Some of the detail in *Metamorphosen* could be clearer, but it is impossible to decide with any certainty whether this is attributable to the performance or recording, or both.

In general, these five issues maintain a remarkably high standard.

*Haydn: Violin Concerto in C major.**

Simon Goldberg with the Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Süsskind.

Parlophone R 20558-60. 18s.

The first movement is uncharacteristic and a little dull, but the second and third do more than make amends. Goldberg's impeccable intonation and style could be an object lesson to violin students generally and to some professional players. Walter Süsskind obtains accurate orchestral playing with good balance and a full understanding of the idiom. The recording is good for the most part but there are traces of distortion on climaxes.

* Strongly recommended.

*Bruch: Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26.**

Ida Haendel with the Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Kubelik.

His Master's Voice C 3802-04. 12s.

The orchestra take the honours in this, the best set of the work so far available in this country. Ida Haendel spoils what might have been a fine effort by occasional lapses of intonation and some careless phrasing. The recording strikes an excellent balance between the various groups of the orchestra and produces an overall effect that is most realistic.

*Beethoven: Overture, Coriolan, Op. 62.**

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Furtwängler.

His Master's Voice DB 6625. 6s.

Dr. Furtwängler's Beethoven in full spate. The conception is big and dramatic, almost attitudinizing: with those occasional exaggerations that have become the hallmark of his very personal interpretations. And yet, there is a vastness about this reading which is more than merely grandiose. Lesser men would be delighted to get half as close to the spirit of Beethoven. The recording is very fine despite the infamous Vienna echo.

*Liszt: Hungarian Fantasia.**

Solomon with the Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Süsskind.

His Master's Voice C 3761-62. 8s.

The old showpiece is given a fine outing here. The recording as a whole reaches a high level, while that of the piano is altogether exceptional: clean, firm, full-bodied and free from audible distortion except towards the disc centres. The players keep the circus element well under control until the last side which becomes, perhaps excusably, a free-for-all. Well worth buying if you have a first-class gramophone.

*Villa-Lobos: A Viola and Cantilena No. 3.**

Frederick Fuller and Heitor Villa-Lobos.

His Master's Voice B 9700. 3s. 3d.

This is the first record of Villa-Lobos to be issued in this country. Performance and recording are in every way exemplary and the songs, though not representative of the composer's full powers, are most attractive.

*Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade.**

L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, c. Ansermet.

Decca AK 1980-85. 28s. 6d.

A new recording of Rimsky's masterpiece was badly needed and Decca may, incidentally, have been prompted to produce it on account of the very searching test it would provide for their wide range recording technique. On the whole this must be regarded as one of the company's outstanding successes: Ansermet obtains a performance which fluctuates between scintillating brilliance and at one point (solo violin, last side) something less than competence, while the average standard of playing is unusually good. The recording, as a whole, is remarkably free from audible distortion and at times performs miracles of "balance" (e.g. side 11, one of the finest specimens of recorded music we have ever heard). It is unfortunate that one climax is spoilt by being taken at minimum radius on side 6, while the review copy of side 7 is marred by "crackling" and surface hiss.

Tchaikovsky: Theme and Variations in G, Op. 55.

London Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Leinsdorf.

Decca AK 1987-88. 9s. 6d.

This is not consistently distinguished either in performance or recording, but readers who are interested in estimating the prowess of individual conductors may learn a great deal about Leinsdorf's musicianship. An interesting rather than a great set of records.

* Strongly recommended.

*Schubert: Trio in B flat, Op. 99.**

Trio di Trieste.

His Master's Voice C 3792-95. 16s.

A good straightforward performance with some incursions into the highest class, this is given clean, well-defined recording with some occasional over-emphasis of the cello.

Gluck-Weingartner: Overture, Alceste.

Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Sargent.

Columbia DX 1508. 4s.

Franck: Les Eolides.

Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Galliera.

Columbia DX 1507. 4s.

The performance of the Franck is good, that of the Gluck fair but lacking in devil. But the recording in both cases is bad with very obvious distortion on climaxes.

G. N. S.

THE BACH SOCIETY, VOLUME VIII.

Solo Violoncello Suites: No. 4 in E flat and No. 5 in C minor.

Pau Casals.

His Master's Voice DB 6538-43 and DBS 6544. 39s.

This completes the issue of Casals' recordings of all six cello suites: he has been largely responsible for the revival of these remarkable works and must be always a public creditor for that. But his manner of playing them is a different matter. One can only assume that he still acts on the propagandist notion that they need to be made interesting, for he does not allow them to speak for themselves. Few other Bach players have indulged in such weird extravagances of *rubato* as this, such destructive distortions of rhythm and *tempo*. None of the quick movements is free to run its course without being tripped and trapped into the most serpentine coils, so that the noble strength of the first movement of No. 5 is lost in what sounds more like a *cadenza ad lib*. Of this piece Prof. Westrup (who writes the useful leaflet) says, "the initial impulse seems to create inexhaustible energy". In Casals' performance there is no initial impulse and few bars at a time in steady *tempo*. This may be Spanish Bach, but its energy is only too exhaustible. In this music Casals is plainly the great personality rather than the great artist: his characteristic personal intensity may be felt throughout, more to advantage in the slow movements, especially the *Sarabande* of No. 4. His tone and intonation are rarely at fault, though there are some technical blemishes in the recording; the microphone picks up the slap of his fingers on the fingerboard, ruining the *Sarabande* of No. 5, which otherwise might have been a moving experience; it sounds as if he is groping for the notes. I have not been able to hear the records of the other suites, and can only hope they are better than these, which cannot be recommended. The fundamental needs are lacking in the playing—firm, vital rhythmic grip and a sense of the architectural power of German melody in its highest and purest form. Not even Casals can make Bach his servant.

THE DELIUS FELLOWSHIP, VOLUMES I AND II.

A Village Romeo and Juliet.

Lorely Dyer, René Soames, Margaret Ritchie, Dorothy Bond, Dennis Dowling, Frederick Sharp, and others, with chorus and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Sir Thomas Beecham.

His Master's Voice DB 6751-62. 72s.

The performance is vocally variable and orchestrally very beautiful. Gordon Clinton as The Dark Fiddler is evenly satisfying (sometimes a little dry), René Soames intense and perceptive as the full-grown Sali. As Vreli Lorely Dyer fails to be moving; her style is too much that of the "light soprano" of musical comedy. The portrayal of two children

* Strongly recommended.

by two sopranos is, as here given, absurd; where can one hear a child with such a *vibrato* as Miss Bond's? Messrs. Dowling and Sharp deal moderately well with the parts of the two farmers, Manz and Marti. Beecham gets from the orchestra very fine work, notably from the wood-wind and horns, who phrase excellently and are precisely balanced: at its best this is the only British orchestra that need not blush beside the famous continental ones. The recording lacks bass definition but the tone is smooth and pleasing.

Enjoyment of the music depends on whether the lush, steaming fertility of Delius can distract the mind from the ridiculous story. For me, two hours of *andantino* is rather too much. There is but one quick section (Scene 5, *The Fair*) and that is no more than a glorified dance, without much musical (as opposed to physical) movement. It is barely credible that Delius' high and fastidious intelligence should have been delayed for a moment by so stupid a pair as Sali and Vreli, who, falling in love despite their fathers' feud, have not the guts to face the neighbours' stares at the Fair and are finally so disgruntled by the sneers of a few vagabonds that they can think only of suicide, carried out in the most exhibitionist and incredible manner; they take the plug from the bottom of a boat filled with nice comfortable straw and sink gracefully (and noiselessly) in the river. The proper conclusion to such a display would be the spluttering, sneezing emergence of the discomfited pair from the half-submerged boat, having discovered that the water was fortunately only a foot deep. But no! the boat is allowed to sink (with ecstatic B major harmonies) in full view of the vagabonds, who presumably have their own private reasons for not fetching the police. Two other things are unconvincing: (1) the quarrel between Manz and Marti boils up far too quickly to create genuine heat and provides no acceptable cause even for so fatuous a plot; (2) the vagabonds in Scene 6 are devoid of devil and life (listen to the half-smothered embarrassed sniggering that passes for sardonic laughter on side 22); the fault lies partly in the performance but more in the music.

With all its staring absurdities the work has its moments of great poetry and the music maintains for the most part a very high imaginative level. The composer's peculiar genius is plain at the very start, which gives a gorgeous impression of sunlit country, the air softly fresh and gently blowing around the serene ploughman; yet through the peaceful scene is expressed the unmistakable regret that colours even Delius' enjoyment of experience. Vreli alone in the dark house (Scene 6) has music of uncanny aptness that almost persuades one that she is a person. But as a whole the opera fails: it contains little that did not emerge later more finely perceived in *Sea Drift*, which has as its burden the same idea of frustrated love, but idealized and symbolized.

*Johann Strauss: Emperor Waltz, Op. 437.**

The New Symphony Orchestra, c. Josef Krips.

Decca K 1874. 4s. 9d.

*Grieg: Symphonic Dances, Op. 64.**

The London Symphony Orchestra, c. Coppola.

Decca K 1869-70. 9s. 6d.

Sibelius: Symphonic Poem, Finlandia, Op. 26.

The Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Malko.

His Master's Voice C 3767. 4s.

Offenbach: Overture, Orpheus in the Underworld.

The National Symphony Orchestra, c. Stanford Robinson.

Decca K 1302. 4s. 9d.

Suppé: Overture, Light Cavalry.

The National Symphony Orchestra, c. Boyd Neel.

Decca K 1300. 4s. 9d.

* Strongly recommended.

Tchaikovsky: Andante cantabile (from the Quartet, Op. 11).

The Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, c. van Beinum.

Decca K 1871.

The *Emperor Waltz* is extremely well played and recorded; Krips seems to persuade the genuine lilt from the players. The Grieg dances are also well done and Coppola brings out the best (that is well worth having) in the music. Malko produces a very fiery and enthusiastic account of *Finlandia*, with fair recording to boot, though nothing can conceal the paucity of the music. Neither the Offenbach nor the Suppé is keenly enough played to make much effect: this stuff needs an *élan* which is entirely lacking in both cases (recording excellent). The Tchaikovsky is beautifully polished and suave, so that its sicklier moments are quite acceptable: the recording does not seem quite so sensitive as it might have been.

Mozart: Il Re Pastore (Act 2)—"L'amerò sarò costante".*

Schwarzkopf and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Krips.

Columbia LX 1096. 6s.

Mozart: Don Giovanni (Act 2)—Recit., "Crudele? Ah no, mio bene!"

Aria, "Non mir dir, bell 'idol mio".

Cebotari and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (nameless conductor).

His Master's Voice DB 6738. 6s.

Wagner: Die Meistersinger—Prize Song, and

Verdi: Simon Boccanegra (Act 2)—Recit., "O Horror!"

Air, "Oh Heaven! In pity hear me".

James Johnston and the Covent Garden Orchestra, c. M. Mudie.

Columbia DX 1506. 4s.

Saint-Saens: Parysatis—The Nightingale and the Rose.

Mozart: Die Zauberflöte—"I'll have revenge" (Queen of Night's aria).

Gwen Catley and orchestra, c. H. Rignold.

His Master's Voice B 9674. 3s. 3d.

Giordano: Andrea Chenier (Act 3)—"La mamma morta", and

Puccini: Manon Lescaut (Act 4)—"Sola perduta abbandonata".

Joan Hammond and the Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Collingwood.

His Master's Voice C 3720. 4s.

Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera (Act 2)—"Ma dall' arido stelo divulsa".

Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana—"Mother, you know the story".

Joan Hammond and the Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Süsskind.

His Master's Voice C 3771. 4s.

Tosti: Segreto, and

Cittadini: Nostalgia d'amore.

Gigli with orchestra, c. Rainaldo Zamboni.

His Master's Voice DB 6705. 6s.

Fauré: L'hiver a cesse (from *La Bonne Chanson*, Op. 61).*

Debussy: Green (*Ariettes Oubliées*, No. 5).

Maggie Teyte acc. by Gerald Moore.

His Master's Voice DA 1893. 4s.

Two of these vocal records are outstanding: Schwarzkopf's lovely Mozart with the Vienna orchestra (her voice seems to have lost the slight edge that has been noticeable), and Maggie Teyte's superb work, especially in the sparkling Fauré song. These two are in the highest class of performance and recording. Vocally the worst by far are Joan Hammond and Maria Cebotari, both of whom ruin their performances with juddering

* Strongly recommended.

vibrato: Miss Hammond even achieves the doubtful feat of combining *portamento* (almost *glissando*) with *vibrato*, a really dreadful sound, which occurs in each of her four items: rarely does she hit a note squarely in its middle. Gwen Catley's singing of an English version of the Queen of Night's aria is neither regal nor nocturnal: accurate enough, but never thrilling. The Saint-Saëns aria shows that variable composer at his worst. James Johnston's version of the *Prize Song* is honest and straightforward, his voice is strong and clear, but he is a little too matter-of-fact in his approach: perhaps the English words help to convey that impression. The aria from *Simon Boccanegra* sounds almost comic in English, and is, in any case, barely surpassable for musical banality. Gigli sings two trifles in his own inimitable (or perhaps all too imitable) manner, with slightly less than the normal ration of sobs. The recordings are all good, with the exception of Gwen Catley's, which suffers from a very dead studio.

Sarasate: Habanera, Op. 21, No. 2.

Wieniawski: Scherzo Tarantelle, Op. 16.

Yehudi Menuhin acc. by Gerald Moore.

His Master's Voice DB 6704. 6s.

Nearly all such *virtuoso* pieces create the impression of a man skittering on the edge of disaster: Menuhin does not escape the usual effect, though he never actually slips over the precipice and his narrow squeezes are very exciting. The music is quite valueless, but it is as well that violinists should put their escapades on record. R. S.

Schubert: Der Wanderer.

Paul Schöffler acc. Ernest Lush.

Decca M 599. 3s. 3d.

Der Wanderer, and

Der Doppelgänger.

Hans Hotter acc. H. von Nordberg.

Columbia LX 1004. 6s.

Der Wanderer an den Mond, and

Nacht und Traume.

Gerard Souzay acc. Jacqueline Bonneau.

Decca M 618. 3s. 3d.

Both issues of *Der Wanderer* are fine, and it is difficult to choose between the singers. Hotter is full and round in tone and his voice is always under control. Can a voice be too much under control? With Schöffler, one is never very sure what, from phrase to phrase, is going to happen. The high nervous tension he maintains makes his interpretation more uneven, but it has greater highlights. Also the Decca recording is the better. The reader is advised to hear both. Hotter's *Der Doppelgänger* is in any case worth having.

The French baritone has now established himself as using, always, a truly beautiful voice with musical insight. His record is spoilt by too much surface noise.

Vaughan Williams: On Wenlock Edge.

Peter Pears acc. Zorian String Quartet.

Decca AM 585-7. 9s. 9d.

The shadow of the great Gervase Elwes is bound to fall on any performance of this magnificent work. Here is the paramount example, in English music, of performers really having something to live up to; Pears acquits himself with all the confidence called for, but, sometimes with too much voice. His singing of "Is my Team Ploughing" is entirely artistic and throughout the cycle passion and sincerity, as of a great poet and a great composer, emerge. That is everything—or almost everything.

Verdi: *Il Trovatore*—Act I: "Tacea la Notte Placida", and
Act IV: "D'amore Sull 'ali Rosee".

Guerrini and Symphony Orchestra of the Augusteo, Rome, c. Bellezza.
Columbia DX 1468. 4s.

Falla: *La Vida Breve*—Act I: "Vivan los que Rien", and
Act II: "Alli esta Riyendo".

Victoria de Los Angeles and The Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Stanford Robinson.
His Master's Voice DB 6702. 6s.

Saint-Saëns: *Samson and Delilah*—"O Love from Thy Power" and "Softly Awakes my Heart".
Janet Howe and the National Symphony Orchestra, c. Boyd Neel.

Decca K 1200. 4s. 9d.

Guerrini's record illustrates what has been said in these pages before: her singing is stylish, but quite unsubtle. The sense of true operatic style is reinforced by the playing of the Augusteo orchestra. Victoria de los Angeles is less polished; but she has absorbed the spirit of her arias and has mastered Falla's idiom. Her performance is entirely satisfactory. By these standards Miss Howe's record is not good, but the singer must not be blamed, since the recording is much below par and one is unsure who is responsible for what one hears.

Rimsky-Korsakov: *Shazka*, Op. 29.

The Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Lambert.
Columbia DX 1485-6. 8s.

Stravinsky: *Concerto in D for Strings*.*

The Hallé Orchestra, c. Barbirolli.
His Master's Voice C 3733-4. 8s.

Thomas: *Raymond*, Overture.

City of Birmingham Orchestra, c. Weldon.
Columbia DX 1493. 4s.

Josef Strauss: *Music of the Spheres*, Waltz, Op. 235.

Boston Promenade Orchestra, c. Fiedler.
His Master's Voice C 3726. 4s.

A waltz by any other Strauss makes one realise afresh how good Johann the younger was. *Music of the Spheres* might have been written by him on some hurried occasion. But it can never have been played as well by his band, or his father's or brother Joseph's, as it is by Arthur Fiedler's. The *Raymond* record is a sound engineering job and a competent performance.

Shazka is not vintage Rimsky. But it has undeniable atmosphere and is less flashily scored than most of his purely orchestral output. *Shazka* is the kind of fairy story when the touch must be light. Rimsky-Korsakov writing with conscious restraint is interesting; and thoroughly charming. The performance and the recording are of the best.

Stravinsky's clever, acidulated *concerto grosso* is a diverting, even exhilarating experience when properly played. Barbirolli and the Hallé strings give a really first class performance:—the kind of performance that should earn them the gratitude of the composer, for this is an apparently easy work which is always in danger from the unrehearsed orchestra and the make-do conductor.

Sarasate: *Zigeunerweisen*, Op. 20.

Ida Haendel acc. Ivor Newton.
Decca K 1842. 4s. 9d.

These gipsy airs are given a sophisticated performance, and we are treated to a sequence of passionate clichés played at a lusty heat which belies Miss Haendel's skirts.

* Strongly recommended.

Ravel: *Alborado del Gracioso*.*

Dinu Lipatti.

Columbia LB 70. 4s.

Medtner: *Round Dance*, Op. 58, No. 1.

Moiseiwitsch and the Composer.

His Master's Voice B 9590. 3s. 3d.

The well-known movement from Ravel's *Miroirs* is gloriously rendered and the record is excellent in every department. The little Medtner work is charming and its distinguished performers play charmingly. Strongly recommended to lovers of Medtner.

J. B.

* Strongly recommended.

Correspondence

30, Herne Hill,
London, S.E.24.

PFITZNER'S PALESTRINA

31st December, 194.

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

SIR,—Your remark in your review of the Salzburg Festival that "Pfitzner's *Palestrina* preludes are dreary stuff, flaccid overblown Wagner" throws an unjustly unfavourable light on an opera which, in the words of Schaab and Gál, "is to be counted among the few very important, lasting works of the last decades".¹ Perhaps these pieces ought not to be performed out of their context. This is even indicated by their titles. The pieces preceding Acts I and III, that is, are called *Einleitungen* (Introductions), and though Pfitzner does entitle the one preceding Act II *Vorspiel* (Prelude), he also refers to it as "*Einleitung*" at a later point in the act. It is to be hoped that this opera will soon become known in this country (perhaps via the Third?), for while Pfitzner's development as an opera composer inevitably owes a great deal to Wagner, *Palestrina* (unlike the *Corregidor**) repays the debt.

Yours faithfully,

HANS KELLER.

¹ Kurt-Schaab, O., and Gál, H., *Musikgeschichte von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, Vienna-Leipzig, 1935.

² See p. 50.

UNION CATALOGUE OF MUSIC

Hon. Secretary: A. HYATT KING, British Museum, London, W.C.1.

3rd January, 1949.

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

SIR,—Your readers may be interested to learn something of the progress of the Union Catalogue of Music, of which the purpose is to bring together in a single compilation all the great wealth of old music (*i.e.* works published in any country before 1800) now stored in libraries throughout the British Isles. Some two years ago, this project, first ventilated in 1945, was translated into reality through a generous gift made by the late Mr. Gerald Cooper. The editor of the catalogue is Dr. O. E. Deutsch, and the destinies of the work are guided by a small council under the chairmanship of the Rev. E. H. Fellowes. More than 100 libraries are being covered, but it is hoped that the work of compilation and editing will be completed by 1952. The total number of entries will run to about 45,000. The ultimate method of publication of this work, which will answer a great and growing need, has yet to be decided, but will probably be on a subscription basis.

Yours faithfully,

A. HYATT KING,

Hon. Secretary.

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